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THE LONDON LIFE

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BY

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TO

MY BEST FRIEND

WILLIAM ARTHUR JONES

PREFACE

In the following pages I have endeavoured to produce a series of clearly defined pictures of certain notable epochs into which London History may be divided. No attempt has been made to trace consecutively or to discuss in detail the political, the social, or the religious life of the various periods dealt with. For such a treatment of the subject the reader may be referred to the scholarly writings of Mr. Loftie and Dr. Sharpe, or to the pleasant pages of Sir Walter Besant's leisurely volumes. What I have tried to essay in this small volume is rather such a presentment of particular epochs as may serve for a background, which the reader can fill in at his leisure from works of a more ambitious and specialized character.

A glance at the selection of books dealing with London life given in the Appendix will indicate how rich a literature we possess on the subject, and my obligations to the many who have specialized on certain epochs of its history are necessarily considerable. I have thought it better not to burden the volume with references, save in a few special instances.

My cordial thanks are due to Mr. Ernest H. Short for the material assistance he has rendered me throughout the preparation of this volume for the press, and to Mr. Henry C. Barker, LL.B., and to Mr. Arthur Bassett, who are responsible for the Index. Mr. Henry C. Barker also kindly helped with the proof reading.

ARTHUR COMPTON-RICKETT.

16 Dryburgh Road, Putney, S.W.
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INTRODUCTION

London . . . a new land
Which foreigners can never understand.
BYRON.

I have seen the greatest wonder which the world can show to the astonished spirit . . . and still there remains fixed in my memory the stone forest of houses, and amid them the rushing stream of faces of living men with all their motley passions, all their terrible impulses of love, of anger, and of hatred—I mean London.—HEINE.

London : that great sea whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore
Vomits its wreck and still howls on for more.

THERE is more than a measure or truth in Shelley's picture. Certain it is that none who know London would deny that its treasures must be sought in the depths. From one point of view there is something terrible about London. The friendless immensity, the chill impassivity of the metropolis that jarred on the sensitive imaginations of Shelley and De Quincey, suggest a point of view which strikes many of us painfully in certain moods. None the less it is hard for any Englishman to escape the fascination of "that great sea"—despite its insistent minor.

And yet, on reflection, why "despite"? Does not the magic of London depend largely upon its appeal to the springs of pity and terror within us? Where there is no mystery there is no magic. Obvious people are the least interesting: and a city which embodied the

spirit of Mark Tapley would not claim our allegiance for long. The songs which pluck at our heart-strings are all of them minor melodies. The primal utterances of the race, the ancient folk-songs, are big with tears. And so it is that the clamorous loneliness, the inscrutable cruelty of the Great City repels and attracts at one and the same moment.

The appeal which London makes is potent also by reason of its complexity. To realise it acutely one must be returning to her as a wanderer from other lands. Then, to us erstwhile aliens, she seems charged with historical associations, personal memories, sorrows, joys, desperations, aspirations, inspirations—an electric tide of emotion which tingles through us, as eagerly we gaze at her familiar grey buildings, the sprawling multiplicity of her life. Friendly is she? Perhaps not. Yet what does it matter! For tarry and listen we must, like the wedding guest in the ballad, to her never-ending story. Of course we rail at her, scold her, preach at her—and when the earth is carpeted with green and gold and the west wind laden with sweetness, then we leave her vowing maybe never to return. But how many of us who sing bravely of the country life, extolling its spaciousness, tranquillity, simplicity, are content with exile from London when "the woods decay, the woods decay and fall"—and we look at Nature in the stark severity of winter?

When we review the past, the share which our City has played in shaping the artistic life of her great men is realised readily. William Langland was no lover of London: he is always sighing in his Vision of "Piers the Plowman" for the pleasant pastures of Malvern. But none of his pictures are so vivid, so instinct with actuality as those dealing with London haunts, the

streets of the City, the mixed company of the tavern. In Chaucer's greatest work, *The Canterbury Tales*, the mediæval City starts into life—the Church, the Hostel, the Mart, the Law Courts. I have no doubt that he cursed his ill fortune when recalled from the rare charm of the Italy of Petrarch and Giotto, to take up the dull routine of a government officialship at Aldgate; yet it was neither from France nor Italy, dearly as he loved them, that he was to receive his finest inspiration—but from London and from the manners and mannerisms of his own fellow citizens. Passing by men of lesser stature, the Gowers and Lydgates, and looking at the wonderful flowering of imaginative life in Tudor London, we see again how profound a debt the singers and jesters owe to the City. In the pages of conservative-minded Stow, of the genial, moralising Harrison, of the austere Philip Stubbes, we may find a valuable commentary on the life of the City. But most valuable in its rich vitality is the picture of Tudor London mirrored in the plays of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson; nor could we afford to dispense with the illuminating sidelights on the life of the day supplied by Dekker, Robert Greene, or Thomas Nash.

In the seventeenth century, no chronicler of the Court, no learned historian of the times, can vie with the cynical wit of Dryden, of Congreve and Wycherley, or the naïve garrulity of Mr. Pepys, in impressing upon the modern reader the corruption, the artificiality, the picturesque folly of Charles the Second's time; although it is not to the dramatist but to the poet that we must turn for the deeper springs of contemporary thought. Whatever opinion may be held as to the value of the Puritan ideal in civic and national life, no one will challenge the rare stimulus which Puritanism gave to our

literature: how it stirred the heart of Milton and fired the muse of Andrew Marvell. Even if we cannot claim Bunyan as a Londoner, yet unquestionably he used the conventions of the City as pigments wherewith to paint his great allegory. Pepys and Evelyn live for us to-day not as Englishmen so much as typical London citizens.

Passing to the eighteenth century, the literature inspired by London grows bewildering in its splendid opulence. To that superb journalist Defoe, the Londoner—his ways, his fashions, his ideals—is a source of infinite 'copy'; the conflict between the lingering feudalism and the austere puritanism finds perfect expression in the prose of Addison and Steele; while for other sides of contemporary life, Pope and Gay are invaluable as commentators. Eliminate London from the pages of Richardson and Fielding, and you deprive them of a large measure of their interest. The humour and squalor of Grub Street are epitomized in one man—Samuel Johnson; and, if the swirl and fury of the human tide of London find imperishable expression in Hogarth, something of the leisured tranquillity of the backwaters is reflected on the gracious canvasses of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

But in the nineteenth century, beyond other ages, one may trace the profound and varied inspiration of London Town. A casual reader might imagine that a greater magic lay in the old, ill-lit, quaint-gabled, rough, and barbarous City: that here indeed was stuff for the imagination of artist and poet, while in the London of scientific improvements mystery and fantasy would find it increasingly hard to find an abiding place.

No doubt this feeling has been at the back of the protests, often ridiculous enough, which have greeted every innovation from the introduction of coaches in

the seventeenth century to the advent of the motor car. But the poetry of London has managed to survive the introduction of gas, and steam and electricity have found their romancers.

In fact it would be no exaggeration to say that the mystery of London has been felt by modern writers far more compellingly than by those of the past. Consider the older poets and prose writers, and note how largely they are occupied by the external life of the city; the pageants, the festivities, the glittering ritual of City Life. Manners and customs—the mien and apparel of London—these things find many a painter. From the sketches of street customs in Lydgate, of festivals in Beaumont and Fletcher, of bohemianism in Greene, of the "quality" in Pope, and the crowd in Gay, one can easily picture the outward and visible London of the Past.

But of the something underlying the component parts of the great City and its varied life, there is little indication until we approach our own age. By a curious irony it was left to Wordsworth, the devoted worshipper of "the woods and rills," to sound the new note on London :—

> The City now doth like a garment wear
> The beauty of the morning. . . .
>
> . . . . .
>
> Dear God! the very houses seem asleep,
> And all that mighty heart is lying still.

The mystery of the great City at rest would have appealed naturally more strongly to the Lake Poet than the mystery of the crowded streets and roar of Life. What interests us so particularly here is that it is the corporate life of London—the personality of the Town, that arrests him. The Wordsworth who re-

discovered Nature for us is a familiar enough figure: Wordsworth as the reluctant pioneer of a new Poetry of London is certainly less well known. Assuredly, from the time of Wordsworth the imaginative literature on London enters upon a fresh phase. In Lamb, De Quincey, Elizabeth Barrett, Shelley, Hood, Carlyle, Dickens, Arnold—to mention a few of the new order, a deeper, more meditative note is sounded consistently. They vary in appreciation from the ardent affection of Lamb down to the distrustfulness of Shelley. But by one and all the fascination of the City is admitted; so also is her impalpable and elusive mystery.

One does not look especially to the so-called Romantic Poets for illustrations of this. And yet, where Wordsworth, albeit unwillingly, has blessed, one must not be surprised when Byron, despite his deep joy in solitary Nature, shows how well he understands the appeal of London:—

> . . . Each wreath of smoke
> Appear'd to him but as the magic vapour
> Of some alchymic furnace, from whence broke
> The wealth of worlds. . . .

The underworld of London is passed lightly over by most of the writers in bygone times. Here and there in the pages of Langland, of Robert Greene, and Thomas Nash,—all of whom wrote from harsh experience,—there are glimpses of the London of suffering, of want and disease. But for the most part the poet, the dramatist, the novelist, is content to paint the lighter and brighter side: or if he touch on other matters it is in a satirical and bantering mood. The change began to be noticeable in the eighteenth century. Addison and Steele strike a deeper note than Dryden and Wycherley, and over against the carefully polished

wit of Pope and the mercurial geniality of Gay, we may place the fierce satire of Swift, the rough tenderness of Johnson, the pictorial 'moralities' of Hogarth.

Coming down to our own Time, the tragic and terrible aspects of the City rarely fail to find expression, even in the work of the humorous commentators of London Life; and there is an increasing tendency for this point of view to monopolize the writer's attention. Whether this is due to a greater sensitiveness on the part of men and women—'an enthusiasm of humanity,' to use a phrase of Shelley's—or whether poverty and distress are more obtrusive than they were, is an interesting question which is too large for discussion here. But this may be said. Neuroticism, that dismal legacy of the Industrial Revolution, has undoubtedly made us more susceptible to pain, more inclined to dwell upon the seamy side of things. Physically speaking, the men of Chaucer's age and of Shakespeare's age seem to have been stronger and hardier than we of to-day. In those unscientific times Nature dealt in her own sharp and summary way with the unfit, and the battle was to the strong. To-day, Science has prolonged life; but in many cases this has merely meant allowing the feeble and diseased to linger on and perpetuate their kind.

It would be absurd to decry the splendid work achieved by modern medical science. But it would be equally futile to deny the increasing complexity of the problems which it faces.

And all this is reflected in the literature and art expressing the London Life of the Age. Some may regret that we can no longer 'recapture' the 'fine careless rapture' of a Chaucer or a Shakespeare in depicting this Life. But every Age has its point of

view, and its psychical characteristics; and in the modern Literature of London, the meditative, self-conscious, introspective, often melancholy note predominates. None can deny that it has a charm and beauty of its own.

But I have no wish to exaggerate the influence of London upon our imaginative life; for some there are both in the past and present upon whose imagination London has left little or no trace—some whom we love and honour.

Wordsworth, despite his sonnet, had no love of London—for the countryman to go there was, as he viewed it, 'a sad emigration'; and assuredly he would not have sympathized with Pope's farewell to the 'dear, damn'd distracting town.' To another William also—William Morris—the City was anathema. And Ruskin was too bitterly incensed by the gratuitous ugliness of modern town life to allow himself to yield to the magic that lurked there, the ugliness and sordidness notwithstanding. But I cannot believe that the champion of Turner—who saw Nature through glorious London mists—was insensible to that magic.

Yet, with few exceptions, the great writers of our time have all yielded to the spell of the 'Great Sea.' Some even whose Art has been but slightly touched by it, as Rossetti, Tennyson, Browning, Matthew Arnold, were none the less deeply indebted to the stimulus of the crowded streets, the show of life. Much of Tennyson's best work was done in the grey smoky metropolis. One recalls his laughing admonition to his brother poet that Browning would die in a white tie; which summarizes Browning's frank, hearty enjoyment of the conventions of society. Arnold's poetry reflects again and again — as in his sonnet "East London"—the problems of the city, and Rossetti's

two poems dealing with the life of the day, "Jenny" and "The Burden of Nineveh," are among his finest. No poet of our time was more thoroughly possessed by the mystery and variety of London than he; and, with the exception of Dickens, it is questionable whether any literary man of the Age knew his London more intimately than Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Mr. Watts-Dunton, for many years the intimate friend of Rossetti and Swinburne, has told me how dearly Rossetti loved the Bohemian haunts of London and the joys of dining out. Keen and observant of the life about him, Rossetti presented a sharp contrast with Swinburne, who also was a great diner-out at restaurants at one time. Swinburne took a delight in meeting the interesting personalities of the day, but his enjoyment of London life was more detached and intellectual than that of Rossetti. Perhaps one might say he was less sensitive to his environment. During the last thirty years of his life, however, during the period of his sojourn at "The Pines," he positively disliked London. But he was keenly alert until the day of his death to the literary and political movements of the hour and ready to discuss them. On the other hand, no aspect of London appealed to Morris, and often would "Topsy"—as his friends called him—come up growling to Mr. Watts-Dunton, as he was lunching at "The Cock" or "The Rainbow" and declaim about the drawbacks of town life. London affected his Art, merely, as an irritant. And all one can say is that were it not for London, the world might have had less eloquent pæans of the restful Thames scenery, which he loved better than anything else in the world.

To examine our Literature in detail, to trace and

discuss the dynamic influence of London upon writers, from the time of Langland to the Age of George Meredith, would be an interesting task. Such, however, is not the purport of the present book.

These brief, cursory considerations on the compelling influence of London are made to show from how ample a storehouse of the literature of the past one may draw pictures of her ways and customs, her aspirations and ideals. For the aim I have in view is this—To know London as a vital organism rather than so much brick and mortar; to realise the continuity of her life amidst the dioramic changes of the scenery. We shall watch the birth of the infant settlement and follow the early vicissitudes of the City through Roman times, until it passes into the hands of the Saxons and the Normans, and at length becomes the London of the Plantagenets. This was the sturdy boyhood of the City. With the Tudors came the impatient fervour of vigorous youth. Then came the sterner manhood of the Stuart and Georgian Ages, and, at last, the ripe maturity — or, if you will, the dotage of Victorian Times. For London Town has many lusty children now, who, in the fashion of the hour, set the authority of the aged parent at naught.

And slight and tentative as this biography may prove to be, yet it will I hope, enable a Londoner to picture the Town in which Alfred and Canute, Whittington and Chaucer, Caxton and Gresham, Shakespeare and More, Cromwell and Wren, Hogarth and Johnson, Place and Dickens, lived, aspired, and achieved.

Two things especially I shall try to emphasize.

The first is this: that the centre of interest changes from age to age. At first the sheer struggle for existence, for a recognition of its corporate life, exhausts

the energies of the City. Later, we have all the jealous isolation of the mediæval town, to whom anyone outside the walls is an alien. Commercial prosperity is the note of one period, religious perplexity of another. The leisurely opulence of Shakespeare's London gives place to the fierce struggle for political liberty under the Stuarts.

A City has moods like an ordinary person: Elizabeth understood the moods of London, consequently London smiled good-humouredly at her little tyrannies. All the Stuarts, save Charles II., lacked tact, and neglected her moods, consequently London refused to brook their tyrannies.

Forces — political, economic, religious, scientific, literary, social, which are always present in the complex life of a great City, vary in importance from age to age. We shake the kaleidoscope and the bits of coloured glass assume fresh shapes, new patterns. The fashioning is different, but the glass and the colouring remain the same.

Which brings me to my second point.

Around this shifting life, with its fresh accentuations, one realises a persistent, fundamental unchangeableness. More remarkable indeed than the shifting diorama is the constant iteration of familiar human characteristics. Were it not so, to speak of a City as a personality would be to flourish words idly. But, just as the "child is father of the man," despite modifications here and changes there, so is there a deep relationship between Chaucer's London and the London of to-day. The changes after all are superficial changes.

The term "Merry London" was in the past, and is to-day, applied to the London of the Middle Ages. If it be meant to draw attention to the show and gaiety,

well and good.[1] If it be meant to signify that England was especially happy at that time, that pain and distress were less prevalent then than in later periods, then the term is misleading. Quite as vital as the pageant of merriment was the dark background of dread disease, and the terror of the Unknown. One might not unreasonably construe the singing and dancing as in some respects merely a feverish attempt to drown dull care, to forget the morrow in the pleasures of the moment. However that may be, I do not think it safe for us to generalize about the amount of joy and suffering in any one age. Certain features of mediæval life have greatly attracted men like Carlyle and Morris, whose souls were sickened by the drab complexity of modern London. But poets (and Carlyle was a poet at heart) must be allowed some licence for exaggeration, and I doubt whether either would have seriously maintained that men and women were altogether better off in the Middle Ages than now. In some respects their condition was better, in others assuredly worse. The worshipper of mediæval London is apt to overlook the plague and the pestilence, and forget the advantages of scientific sanitation. Not that there is any need for us to go to the other extreme and speak pitifully about the "bad old days"; we are far too indebted to the past to speak slightingly of it. From the material point of view the modern Londoner may claim superiority over his mediæval brother. Making allowance for the extremes of poverty engendered by modern capitalistic conditions, the average Edwardian Londoner is better off than the Londoner of Fitz-Stephen's time, or of Shakespeare's time, or of Cromwell's time. For this, the discoveries of modern science, and their application

[1] The word 'merry,' as used by Chaucer, means happy, sane, healthy, desirable.

to political and social conditions, are mainly responsible. But from the spiritual point of view, I doubt whether we are justified in speaking so sweepingly as sometimes we do of the march of progress. If we have learned the wisdom of toleration, we have unlearned the wisdom of masterly purposefulness. If the level of culture has risen there are fewer great mountain peaks. And rich as the annals of our time are in illustrations of the finer, altruistic qualities of our nature—tenderness, unselfishness, compassion, unswerving devotion to duty are monopolies of no one century, as the London of the early Franciscans, of Sir Thomas More, of John Hooper, of Sir Philip Sidney, of George Fox can testify.

The monitions of Father Vaughan and Father Adderley were uttered long ago by Langland. There were Stiggins's and Chadbands in the world which Chaucer knew. And in Hannah More's advice to "young ladies," one is strangely reminded at times of the strenuous counsel of George Eliot. Manners change, knowledge increases, but the satirist and the moralist are always with us, to remind us that the "ape and tiger" within are fully as rampant, even if the varnish on the surface be a little deeper.

In short, Human Nature is the same to-day as it always has been. One recalls Professor Maitland's quiet reproof to a student who spoke to him of the Dark Ages: "I suppose you mean, Sir, the Ages that are dark to you!"

And this is why the writings of men like Chaucer, Shakespeare, Dickens speak so directly to us; for, transcending the superficial characteristics of their Age, they strike a chord that responds in all the Ages—the chord of our common humanity with its mingled splendour and meanness.

CHAPTER I

LONDON IN THE MAKING

Hail, Thames, hail!—BYRON.

PALÆOLITHIC AND NEOLITHIC LONDON

LITTLE need be said of the earliest inhabitants of Greater London—Palæolithic man. A devoted geologist, Mr. James Cross, has spent many years searching for evidence of Palæolithic culture in the Tertiary deposits swept together by the Thames near Gravesend. The present river flows at least a hundred feet below the deposits of silt and gravel in which Mr. Cross' fine series of London palæoliths were found. They can be seen at the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh. The tomahawk is the weapon most generally met with—a flint or stone with a "butt" or bruising end, a cutting edge, a well-marked strengthening rib, and a "tang" to which the wooden shaft was bound. This was bound to a split stick with a fibre fastening. With these hand-daggers were found, heavy at the base and sharply pointed, with a carefully hollowed place for the thumb and finger tips. Strangely enough, all these palæoliths were found within a strictly limited area. All the evidence goes to show that the site of the palæolithic finds was a ford by which the primitive Londoners crossed the Thames. If men lay there in wait for the game which might come to the ford to drink, or the

traveller who might be passing that way, it is easy to see why weapons would be found in the river's silt at that spot and nowhere else. But, however this may be, there existed the ford over the Thames in Palæolithic times. The relation between the river ford and Early London cannot be insisted upon too strongly. Before this chapter ends it will be mentioned again and again.

If no good purpose is served by dwelling at length upon the civilization of Palæolithic man, equally little need be said of the Neolithic folk who succeeded him. The dark, curly-haired, narrow-headed, dwarfish men of the Neolithic age possessed the island until the Celts ran their keels ashore upon the gravels and sands of Kent. Doubtless, they cut their terraced fields, their long grave barrows, and communal earth-works where London now stands.

But groups of Palæolithic or Neolithic huts about the Thames ford were but the raw material of London, not the town itself. It is the arrangement within a definite whole which makes a living entity out of a mere agglomeration of parts. Not the things in themselves but the relation in which they stand the one to the other, ensures vitality. If London existed in those early days it was in the embryonic form which precedes birth.

Celtic London

The same must be said of London after the invasion of the Celtic tribes, who brought bronze and iron implements, pottery turned on the wheel, and the first rude art efforts to Great Britain. Only tradition tells of the London of Brute—"sprung of old Anchises line," —the mythical founder of the town, according to the garrulous old chronicler, Geoffrey of Monmouth. The

fable narrates that one night the goddess Diana appeared to Brute, the grandson of Aeneas, and bade him sail into the Western seas until he should find the White Island. Brute came to "Albion" and landed at Totnes. Giants innumerable, led by Gog and Magog, opposed the Trojan hero; but in the end he conquered the White Island and called it Brut's Tan (Britain). New Troy, his chief town, was built on the banks of the Thames, and a great temple to Diana set up in its midst. In the outer court Brute placed the sacred stone—the London Stone—said to be the pedestal which once supported the great statue of Pallas at Troy, and upon which the preservation of that city was fabled to depend. The London Stone can be seen to-day, set in the wall of Saint Swithin's Church off Cannon Street.

Whatever may be the element of truth in the tale, this is certain: the London Stone was accounted old when the Romans entered the town. In later years it stood in the heart of the city. From its base proclamations were read, and throughout the Middle Ages the English King struck his sword upon the stone in token of the town's submission to his will. Shakespeare has imagined the eagerness with which Jack Cade struck upon London Stone and cried,—"Now is Mortimer lord of this city."

A less impenetrable darkness surrounds Celtic London in later times. By the second century B.C. the Britons could build stockaded forts. They lived in beehive huts of wood and wattle, with roofs of fern and thatch. They had knowledge of weaving, dyeing, and the use of the plough. Moreover, they were expert metal workers. In battle they wore cuirasses of plaited leather, and carried swords, pikes, bows, and slings. The

Celtic settlement, which doubtless arose upon the banks of the Thames, can be pictured from these details. No definite evidence of any other kind remains.

The first record which is worthy of more than passing notice relates to a period a thousand years after the mythical Brute. In those days King Lud is said to have repaired the city and "increased the same with fair buildings, towers, and walls, and after his own name called it Caire-Lud, as Lud's town; and the strong gate which he built in the west part of the city he likewise, for his honour, named 'Ludgate.'"

The story adds that King Lud's two sons were too young to govern after their father's death, and Cassivelaunus, their uncle, secured the throne of Britain. In the eighth year of the reign of Cassivelaunus came Julius Caesar. So we come upon familiar names and a familiar date.

This was the summer of 55 B.C.

Caesar remained three weeks in the country. For eighty-eight years after his invasion Britain was undisturbed. Many Gauls who had incurred the suspicion of the Roman leaders fled to the island. They had no reason to expect aught but a ready welcome. Writing in 56 B.C., Caesar mentions that the Britons sent aid to the Vineti (a Gaulish tribe) during the latter's revolt against Rome. Under the influence of the Gaulish immigrants the Britons substituted iron weapons for the earlier ones of bronze, began to work their mines, and to rear cattle. The British chiefs grew wealthy, and towns began to arise.

Although Caesar makes no mention of London, it is clear that during this century London developed into the busy trading centre described by Tacitus. By that time—A.D. 61—the place was a recognized meeting-

place for British traders, and a market where the Islanders were wont to meet over-sea merchants from Gaul. Even at this period London fog attracts attention, though from the account of the Roman Historian we should adjudge it less obnoxious than the "London particular" so feelingly described by Dickens.

This is the London which Londoners of to-day can recognize—a clearing-house for national and continental trade, rather than a military settlement or manufacturing centre. One element is wanting. Centuries were to pass before the town became a political centre of the first order. As early as the first years of the Christian era, however, London was probably the most important distributing centre in England, the meeting-place of the home and continental traders.

In the light of this knowledge let us examine the problem of the foundation of London afresh.

No site could have been less promising for a great City. A dismal swamp of low-lying marshes between two and three miles in breadth extended from the present day Fulham to what is now Greenwich. Through this ran the tortuous Thames—not the narrow, muddy river that intersects modern suburban London and the City, but a broad, clear-flowing stream, that made of the marshes at high tide one vast lake some two or three miles across. Such Districts that are now Kennington, Lambeth, Southwark, Wapping, Poplar, and Deptford were included within the swampy country. From the midst of the marshy lake arose a series of islands. These can still be recognized from their names; for instance, Batters-ey, Bermonds-ey, Thorn-ey (eyot in Anglo-Saxon signifying an island),—the Island of Thorney, now Westminster, having an especial bearing on the development of London.

Feeding the great river were a series of tributary streams which flowed from the high ground to the North and South of the river bed—the West-bourne, the Ty-bourne, the Wall-brook, and the Fleet river.

Finally, the country to the North and South of the marshes was sharply defined by a long, low cliff between twenty and forty feet high,—evidently the original banks of the great glacial stream, the parent of the Thames of to-day.

Though the boundary cliffs were generally between two and three miles apart, at places they came close to the central stream. Thus, on the Northern side, the cliff ran down close to Dow-gate, and followed the line of the present river bed as far as Charing Cross.

Moreover, two small hills arose by the river bank at the spot where the Wall-brook entered the larger stream. As there was no marshy land between the two hills, a natural haven was formed.

It may well be that the Romulus of London was the man who first conceived the idea of constructing a stockade, and cutting a trench upon one or other of the overhanging hills to protect the shipping in the river. What more natural than that he should call the place Llyn-Din—the "lake fortress." Behind lay the dense Middlesex Forest. In front, the marsh wastes, and close by, the little river haven at the mouth of the Wall-brook, with its ever-increasing number of trading craft.

In the earliest times it is probable that the trade was not carried over the site of London but passed close by. A great road ran from North to South, doubtless that which became known in Saxon times as Watling Street. It touched modern London at the point where Edgware Road merges into Park Lane, and then ran along to the edge of the marsh between the West-bourne and

the Ty-bourne, finally coming to a ford close by the island of Thorney. At Thorney the traders from the North took refreshment and waited for low tide before wading across the marsh to ford the main stream. Thence their way was by Lambeth (Lamb-hite), and, finally, to the higher ground whence the Dover road started.

The importance of Thorney is evidenced by the numerous Roman remains which have been found there. Tradition tells that Lucius—the first Christian king—built a church there on the site of a temple of Apollo. A document dated A.D. 785 tells of Offa of Mercia conveying the manor of Aldenham to "St. Peter and the people of the Lord dwelling at Thorney."

But long ere this the importance of Thorney had commenced to decline. The end came about the time of Boadicea, when the first London Bridge was built. It will be remembered that in earlier times the continental traders had chosen Dover as the most convenient landing-place. In course of time they came to learn the advantages of an inland port. By using the strait between Thanet and the Mainland, the dangerous passage around the North Foreland was avoided. Once within the banks of the Thames and no more cosy little harbour could be imagined than the little creeks at the mouths of the Wall-brook and the Fleet river. The exigencies of this river trade led to the cutting of a new road, which struck into Watling Street, at the Marble Arch. It followed the line of Oxford Street, through Holborn into the City, and finally came to the head of the bridge across the Thames.

Here the merchant-buyers and merchant-sellers met, the trading-ships lying beneath the bridge to discharge or receive merchandise.

Of the lives which these merchants lived, of the bargains which they struck and the goods which they bought and sold, little can ever be known. But by the exercise of the historical imagination, and the bold use of analogy, something may be learnt. Sir Walter Besant conjectures that the trade was only carried on during the summer months. In those days even the North Sea pirates and the adventure-loving Danes laid up their vessels during the winter. So, too, inland trade was only possible during six months in the year. During the rainy period town was isolated from town by almost impassable stretches of fen and moor. When the ships had unloaded their cargo, and the caravans had set out upon their return journeys to the North and West, late Celtic and early Roman London was practically deserted. In other words, early London was little more than an annual Fair — a collection of temporary booths used for the accommodation of traders and the display of merchandise, much as the fair at Nijni Novgorod is at present. With the summer its inhabitants passed away, and only a few fishers and hunters remained.

Summing up these conjectures as to the early history of London this may be said. In the first place there was the settlement of lake dwellers. Then came the British fortress on the hill named by reason of its position on the great Lake—Llyn-Din. Meanwhile, Thorn-ey was of greater importance because of the trackway across the marshes. Ultimately, Llyn-Din is found to be a more convenient site for trading, and vessels came through the channel (then navigable) between the Isle of Thanet and the mainland.

Roman London

Such were the general circumstances in the trading town on the Thames bank during the early years of the Roman occupation. The invasion of London by the hordes under Boadicea in A.D. 61, however, forced the Romans to adopt a new policy. The Queen had raised a huge, undisciplined host in Norfolk and the Eastern countries. Sweeping down upon the Roman colonies at Colchester and St. Alban's, the woad-stained, shaggy-haired Britons took a full revenge for the outrages their Queen had suffered. Tacitus tells that 70,000 Romans were killed in Colchester, St. Albans, and London during the raid. Upon Boadicea's approach, the Roman soldiery evacuated London, but permitted as many of the inhabitants as wished to do so to accompany them. The rest were left and, in the event, were massacred by the avenging Britons.

The Citadel and Bridge

Directly after Boadicea's defeat and death a citadel and bridge were built to secure the trade-way which passed by the port at the mouth of the Wall-brook. The continuous history of London dates from that time. The booths of the earlier town were gradually swept away. Instead, permanent warehouses were put up for the storage of goods. Quays were erected, including the large one at Billings-gate. A considerable residential population settled down in the outskirts of the town, and villas were built in imitation of the civilization of such Roman provincial towns as Marseilles and Bordeaux.

The Roman Citadel arose on the Eastern bank of the Wall-brook. By following the line of the ruined

walls, it has been found that it occupied a space of some 2250 feet by 1500 feet, and extended from Wallbrook to Mincing Lane, and from the river to Corn-hill. The space is approximately that usually allotted to a legion for its camp. The actual foundations have been excavated and identified at Cannon Street Station, in Mincing Lane and Cornhill. The walls were, doubtless, similar to those at Porchester, with round bastions at intervals. Within were all the Roman official buildings.

The second essential—the Bridge—was built in this wise. Some means of communication was essential between the Citadel and the military camps in the South of England. The Roman commander naturally bethought himself of a wooden bridge set upon piles, of the usual military type. Above the piles, beams were laid, and above these hurdles of woven twigs to carry the surface of earth and gravel. It will be seen that the first London Bridge was not the substantial erection generally associated with the term. Indeed, Snorro Sturleson, the Icelander, writing of Canute's siege of London, relates how Canute's boatmen, working from the river, were able to pull down part of the bridge. It was not intended to carry heavy vehicular traffic. So long as troops, and mules with provisions and other *impedimenta*, could cross the river, it was sufficient.

If the road from the Bridge, following the course of Holborn and Oxford Street, and joining "Watling Street," close to the Marble Arch, had been made before the building of the bridge, it was doubtless widened soon afterwards. With the building of the Citadel and Bridge this road became more popular every year, at the expense of the rival way past Thorney.

The population of Roman London was made up of much the same elements as the London of our own

times. Merchants, ship-owners, stevedores, warehousemen, clerks, priests, shopmen, and craftsmen—the latter with their guilds, each under the protection of a member of the *curia* or corporation. As to the language, the upper classes spoke Latin. The common folk used a pidgin-Latin—a grammarless Latin augmented with words from all the tongues spoken by the traders and sailors frequenting the port.

Comparatively few remains of Roman London can now be seen. Guesses have been made as to the sites of the forum, the theatre, and the principal temples, but with little success. Many tesselated pavements have, however, been found, showing the luxury which must have been general in the larger villas. The majority of these arose along the banks of the Wall-brook. The actual buildings were of wood, as can be inferred by the layers of ashes which cover the tesselated pavements so frequently. The windows were doubtless generally "glazed" with oiled paper, though flat pieces of glass have been found among the ruins of Roman villas which may well have once been window panes. Traces of wall paintings have also been unearthed. They show that the living rooms of a Roman villa in London were decorated with painted panels of the type found at Pompeii, though without the artistic qualities of the Italian examples.

For the rest, he who would gain a clearer idea of Roman civilization in London should turn to the treasures of the Guild Hall Museum. Sections of columns, statuary, pottery, coins, hairpins, mirrors, glass bottles, tools, and weapons can be seen. They are not beautiful. The metal is rusted and the pottery stained by the long imprisonment in the London clay. But they are the very things which our forefathers

touched and handled. A Londoner, at any rate, may well spend an idle hour wandering among the dusky cases.

The End of the Roman Period

Only one other point must be noticed. A few words must be said as to the political circumstances in Roman London. The town was never a "municipium" —*i.e.* city of the first rank. The two British cities of this class were York and Saint Albans. London and eight other towns were "colonia." That is to say, the citizens of London enjoyed *civitas* or the rights of Roman citizenship, and the government of the town was free from the control of Imperial officials. Two magistrates—the *decemviri*—were chosen annually by the *curia*, and a town council was elected at intervals, the members of which served for fifteen years. The people were represented by their own officer, the *defensor civitatis*, whose duty it was to protect the citizens from any tyrannical action on the part of members of the *curia*.

This municipal government was connected with the general Roman rule in Britain, and again with that in Italy. The civil Governor of Britain had his head-quarters not in London but at York, doubtless because of the constant fighting upon the northern marches. He, in his turn, was responsible to the Prefect of Gaul at Treves or Arles.

For many years this system worked well, and the Roman hold upon Britain became more and more sure. But during the third century the island had more than its share of the usurping emperors who were seizing the power throughout the Roman Empire. One soldier after another claimed to be *Imperator* in Britain.

Among these, the most notable was Carausius—ambitious, hot-blooded, and masterful Carausius. Dr. Stukeley, after a careful examination of the coins of the period, is of opinion that Carausius was of Welsh descent, and became commander of the Roman fleet in the channel, charged with the task of stopping the piracy which was so prevalent. Learning that the Emperor Maximian was jealous of his growing power, Carausius proclaimed himself Emperor, and landed in Britain in A.D. 288. He established a mint in London in celebration of his accession. A further series of coins were struck after Carausius defeated Maximian and Diocletian in a great naval battle, which forced the Emperors to recognize his position in the island.

But leadership in those days, as in the days of Israel, was an uncertain quantity. Eglon may reign undisputed for a while, and then comes the inevitable 'left-handed man with the dagger.' And so, after a few years of triumphant rule, Carausius was murdered by a rival general, Allectus, in London, who, in his turn, proclaimed himself *Imperator*. But this time the Emperor Constantius took no risks. Collecting an army, he landed in Sussex, and marched upon London. Allectus was defeated south of the Bridge in a pitched battle. Tradition is uncertain as to the site. Clapham, Wimbledon, and Vauxhall have all been mentioned. In the end, Constantius brought his fleet up the river, and the remnants of the soldiery of Allectus were slaughtered in the streets of London. Constantius marched North to York, and remained there till A.D. 306, when he was succeeded by Constantine the Great, who left in A.D. 310.

When the Emperor Constans came to Great Britain in A.D. 347, the political circumstances were far more

threatening. Following upon Constans' departure there was a period of tumult, during which the Picts and the Scots invaded the North of England frequently. When Theodosius was sent by Valentinian to repel the invasion, he found the enemy ravaging the country as far south as the Thames. Probably the first London Wall—as distinguished from the wall of the Roman citadel—was hurriedly put up about this time.

The campaign of Theodosius was the last real effort which Rome made to hold Britain. The Roman legions were in a continual state of mutiny after he left. Usurpers arose, and in 407 Constantine, the last of a long series, collected the Roman soldiery and crossed to Gaul. The Britons were left to struggle helplessly against the Picts and Scots in the North and the pirates in the surrounding seas. The end came in 410, when the citizens of London, in common with those of the other towns in the island, received a letter from Honorius telling them that they must no longer rely upon Rome for aid.

Roman London was at an end.

CHAPTER II

THE LONDON OF ALFRED AND CANUTE

> Strong be thy Wallys that about thee standis ;
> Wise be the people that with thee dwellis.
>
> WILLIAM DUNBAR.

A VEIL of obscurity hangs over London for about two hundred years after the departure of the Romans. We know that the Romans left Britain early in the fifth century, and that early in the seventh century the East Saxons are in possession of London. During that time a fierce conflict was going on which was revolutionizing the whole country and turning Old Britain into New England. But there are two brief records only in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle which throw any light upon London, and that light serves to decorate rather than illuminate the darkness.

The first record narrates how, in 457, after the battle of Crayford, the Kentish fugitives took refuge in London :—

> In this year Hengist and Æsc, his son, fought against the Britons at the place which is called Crecganford, and then slew 4000 men, and the Britons then forsook Kent and in great terror fled to London.

The second record is in 604, when we hear that: "This year the East Saxons received the faith and baptism under King Sebert and Bishop Mellitus."

Mellitus was Bishop of London, and we gather from Bede that his ministrations were not especially welcome to the pagan sons of Sebert. They seem to have resented the ritual of Baptism as a reflection upon their personal cleanliness, and, when Mellitus insisted upon its necessity, they solved the dispute, in a way peculiar to Princes for many centuries to come, by exiling the Bishop and his followers.

These big-limbed, fair-haired giants had no liking for town life, and we know that they avoided the towns as much as possible, dwelling in country districts and protecting themselves by earthworks.

Why is it that, while there is abundant material about the progress of the Saxons in other parts of the country, so little is known of the history of London, which fell into the hands of the East Saxons?

The explanation is due probably to the fact that, with the departure of the Romans, London had fallen from its high position into decay. It was a place of trade; and for trade there were few opportunities during the tempestuous incursions of the Saxon Conquerors. It was a walled city; and the Saxons knew little of the art of fighting behind walls. The citadel had been pulled down, and the cost of maintaining the outer walls would have been considerable. Whatever may be conjectured, however, it is certain that when the Saxons did take possession, no Celtic names of places remained. For practical purposes, nothing survived of Roman London. During the years of obscurity it passed away so completely that the London of the Saxons is really a New London. The Roman shell remained, but nothing survived of Roman life and habits of thought.

"Britain," wrote Bishop Stubbs, "had been occupied

by the Romans but had not become Roman." And here we may find the explanation of its want of continuity. The Romanizing of London was a veneer which speedily wore off on the departure of the Romans. But early in the eighth century Bede informs us that London "is the mart of many nations resorting to it by sea and land." Evidently, therefore, the period of stagnation has passed away, and London is once more a place of trade.

The Danes

No sooner, however, has London begun to flourish anew than the Danish invaders threaten disturbance to its peace and prosperity. Sprung from the same common stock as the Saxons, they exhibited all the fiercer qualities of the Teuton, without those softer characteristics which had toned down the native savagery of the more southern Race. Environment and climate have even up to this day preserved many of the characteristic features of these Northmen; a certain primal sturdiness; a moody fierceness; an underlying melancholy. And we, to-day, who read the old Sagas, can picture to ourselves these stern fighting folk in their long galleys from which streamed the raven black ensigns, as they bore down upon our coasts in the tenth century.

In fighting they were more than a match for the Saxon—their brother, who had practised the arts of peace and forgotten much of his fighting prowess—and it is probable that the settlement (855) was anything but a pacific one. These Vikings consisted of bands of martial adventurers led by some giant of prowess. Well armed and well drilled, they carried all before them, burning the monastic houses and slaughtering

men, women, and children wherever they went. The Viking was as compared with the Saxon as the professional soldier to the volunteer. The Dane was a born fighter—and the business of his life was warfare. He was, moreover, better equipped with arms than the Saxon, and had it not been for the numbers against him, the Dane would speedily have conquered the land. As it was he contented himself with harrying the land, and withdrawing when the Saxons swarmed out from the country districts like angry bees to repel the rough invaders.

It was through the energy and promptitude of Alfred that the English became better equipped and organized, and that something of a fleet was put together which might dispute with the Danes the control of the Channel.

Wild, imaginative, brave, and brutal, the new settlers were to make a permanent impression upon the life of the City. The thing that they esteemed above all others was physical courage, and their kings had perforce to abdicate when too old to do their proper share of fighting.

Meat, bread, and ale in large quantities satisfied their physical needs at the close of the day. And for relaxation there were various rough games, which sufficiently indicate the primitive tastes of the revellers. For instance, a game which delighted these mighty men above others seems to have consisted in the 'chucking' of large beef bones at one another—a perilous pastime, which put a speedy end to the career of one unhappy Archbishop—Alphege of Canterbury. Being sent for on a certain festive occasion by a troop of Danish soldiers, the ecclesiastic interrupted their bone-throwing merriment, and, being less skilful in 'ducking' than

the Danes presumably were, he was struck on the head and killed.

Whether the Danes drank more freely than the Saxons is a point not easy to determine. Englishmen have always been celebrated for their social proclivities in this direction, and it may be that the Danish constitution was the more violently affected by deep potations. Be that as it may, it is interesting to note that even in Shakespeare's day, and at a time when Harrison was lamenting the drunkenness of his countrymen, the Danes were still supposed to give us points in the matter of intemperance. There are elaborate references in Hamlet to the Danish drinking customs. Says Horatio :—

> This heavy-headed revel, east and west,
> Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations ;
> They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
> Soil our addition ; and indeed it takes
> From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
> The pith and marrow of our attribute.

And in the political note-books of the time several references are made to this tendency to indulge in 'heavy-headed revel,' which show the reputation of Denmark in this respect. One is inclined to look upon the imputation of English writers as somewhat of the pot and kettle order, for judging from a curious and amusing account in Harrington's *Nugae Antiquae*, on the occasion of Christian IV.'s visit to England, the festivities were as wildly uproarious as could possibly be. The Representation of Solomon and the coming of the Queen of Sheba was given, but the 'presenters' failed to carry out their pleasant allegory, inasmuch as "wine did so occupy their upper chambers." Victory entered with a brave show, but speedily went to sleep

upon the stairs. Hope and Faith were so uncertain of gait as to have to withdraw, and Peace, "much contrary to her semblance, rudely made war with her olive branch" upon those who presumably gave her the hint that all was not well with her.

But to return to Saxon and Danish London.

Alfred and his Work (878-901)

With the coming of Alfred, London life starts afresh.

He discerned the importance of the place, and did much to make it more habitable and defensible. The wall was repaired; a fortress was built within the city which afterwards developed into the Tower of London, and security was given to merchants. So much did he do for London and London Life that he has been called by some writers the *Founder* of London. Perhaps the *Restorer* of London would be a more correct term, inasmuch as Alfred made possible municipal factors in London Life, which gave it a unique position in after ages and enabled it to defy the encroachments of jealous kings.[1]

So far London had taken no prominent part in English history, although its geographical position was so obviously advantageous for trade purposes. But its growth for a while had been checked, first by the conquest by Egbert, and secondly by the exhausting struggle with the Danes. At a later period it held its own fairly well against Danish onslaught, but from 850 to 880 it was practically at the mercy of the

[1] As a legislator he did but clarify the important legal codification of Ethelbert of Kent. The three Saxon legislators of note are Ethelbert of Kent, Ine of Wessex, and Offa of Mercia.

Northern invaders who made Fulham the base of their destructive operations.

In 856 Alfred got the better of the foe, and as Green points out in his *Conquest of England*, from a military point of view, "the recovery of the Thames Valley with the winning and fortification of London was of great moment, for it closed to the Danes that waterway by which in past times the pirates had advanced to the attack of Wessex."

Alfred did more than repair the material forces of the City; he helped to lay the foundation of English Literature. It was his wish for "every youth now in England that is free-born and has wealth enough to be set to learn, as long as he is not fit for any other occupation, till they well know how to read English writing; and let those be afterwards taught in the Latin tongue who are to continue learning and be promoted to a higher rank."

Previous to Alfred the charter was invariably in Latin: Bede had set the fashion and others had followed him. Now the Saxon tongue found expression. Poetry, it is true, had already made a vigorous start in the epic of Beowulf, and in fugitive songs and ballads. But from Alfred's time English Prose may be dated. The King himself led the way in the work of translation, aided by the scholars of the time, who were, of course, ecclesiastics. "I think it better," he said, "to render some books that are most needful for man to know, into the language that we may all understand." Not the least important was his version of Bede's history.

Alfred reorganized the fyrd—the ancient military force—on somewhat of a feudal basis, which greatly increased its efficiency; and with a clear appreciation of the insular position of England he set to work to

create a national fleet; he improved the size of the vessels, saw that they were efficiently controlled by Northern "pirates"—the Northmen were far more skilled in naval warfare than the Saxons—and after his death the English Navy showed its prowess in the Channel.

With his strong sense of justice and order he worked hard to preserve "the King's Peace"; and he paved the way for later reforms, especially for that elaborate system of centralization which marks the legal policy of the Norman Kings. He did not create fresh laws or "dooms," but he clarified those existing, rejecting many which seemed to him "not good."

Not yet, however, is London the capital of the Kingdom. As Freeman has remarked, London filled much the same place in England which Paris filled in Northern Gaul a century later. But Paris became a national Capital only because its local Count grew into a national King; London, amid all the changes within and without, has always kept more or less of her ancient character as a free city.

Alfred had rescued and protected the City from the Danes; his successors were less successful. Ethelred the Unready hoped by bribery to do what he could not effect by intimidation; but the bribery proved too expensive, and in 991 the Danes sailed up the Thames. At first the Londoners proved equal to the emergency, and the Danes were beaten off; whilst in 994 the celebrated King Olaf fared no better in his attack upon the Wall. But after the treacherous massacre of the Danes throughout the land, and the death of Ethelred, first Swegen, then Canute overran the country. Upon the death of his only rival, Edmund Ironsides, Canute was crowned at St. Paul's, and for a brief

space after the many years of fighting, there was peace again.

It is worth noting that during all this time London was the only place which had resisted effectually the Danish encroachments. Otherwise the Danish invaders had had it much their own way. There is a note of triumphant satisfaction about the remark of the Chronicler :—" They often fought against the Town of London, but to God be praise that it yet stands sound."

A curious story relating to the first siege by the Danes is told by an Icelandic writer of the thirteenth century, which illustrates the uncertain character of the bridge about this time.

King Olaf[1] made a kind of raft, which he put round his ships so that men could stand and work on it, and fixed the ships to the bridge. Then all rowed as hard as they could, and with the help of the tide pulled down that part of the bridge and all upon it !

The bridge was standing and in repair at the time of Canute.

Canute was an excellent King, second only in importance, so far as London is concerned, to Alfred ; strong without being tyrannous, clear-headed without being crafty. He died in 1035.

John Richard Green has thus summed up the London of these times : " The story of early London is not that of a settled community slowly putting off the forces of Rome for those of English life, but of a number of little groups scattered here and there over the area within the walls—each growing up with its

[1] This is not the King Olaf who had harried Ethelbert, but another who took Ethelred's side after the massacre of the Danes, and helped to take the city out of the hands of the Danes. The Icelandic story has been translated by William Morris and Arni Magnusson (*Heimskringla*, vol. ii. p. 14).

own life and institutions, gilds, sokes, religious houses and the like, and only slowly drawing together into a municipal union which remained weak and imperfect even at the Norman Conquest."

It would be hard to better this description. The high ground, where now stands St. Paul's, was probably at this time a rural, lonely spot, part of the common folk-land which Ethelbert granted to Bishop Mellitus for the Early Cathedral Church. It is well to realize that West of St. Paul's there was practically no London.

London in this age was the "Cheap," and the life of the Londoner clustered along the narrow stream of the Walbrook, the main tributary from the North-East, which fed the pleasant and ample channel of the Thames. Saxon London started with New Gate (the West Gate) and stretched to St. Botolph's, Aldgate, on the East side. On the North it skirted the district of Cripplegate and Bishopsgate, and ran down South to the River.

The City's growth had been arrested, as we have seen, by the struggle with the Danes, and started anew under Alfred. Under Athelstan there are the beginnings of self-government, for it is then we hear first of the gild which was to play so important a share in the municipal life of the future. At this time, however, it is more in the nature of a crude police organization than an industrial society, into which afterwards it developed.

Under Edgar, Commerce increased considerably. There was trade with the North, with the Rhineland, and with Normandy. Especially vigorous was the port of Billingsgate, and the growing population of East London testifies to its influence.

Under Canute it is clear that London is the com-

mercial and military centre of England, though not yet can we call it the political centre ; but the strong rule of Canute did much to bring about this consummation.

Among the London Churches may be found traces of the Danish Settlements; several city churches, for instance, were named after King Olaf.

Of Canute's immediate successor there is little record. Harold and Hartha Canute lived but a short time ; the latter justifying the reputation of his countrymen as lovers of strong drink by drinking himself to death as speedily as he could manage at Kennington Palace. Harold was buried at Westminster—the first King of England to be buried there.

The accession of Edward the Confessor is not of special consequence in the history of the City. Beyond the shifting of the royal residence from the City to Westminster there is little change to note in the Life of London. Edward himself was pious and weak-minded, without the initiative and grip of many of his predecessors. This, however, must be said of him, when he was gathered to his fathers, that he had done nothing which in any way set back the progressive life of the City. He was a monarch of negative excellences, and few have won a halo more easily than he.

Trade.—The distribution, collection of exports, and internal traffic, were conducted entirely by English merchants. "Chapmen" would go out yearly in caravans protected by armed servants, and move, not from village to village, where bad side-roads made communication a desperate matter, but from market to market, keeping thus to the big main roads.

The Gilds, which afterwards formed the nucleus of the commercial life of the city, were at this time essentially social, being 'benefit' societies with a strong religious element.

A notable example may be found in the Frith Gild of London, under Athelstan. As usual, the Bishop and the Reeve (as spiritual and temporal head of the city) are responsible for the laws of the Society. From these we learn that the members meet monthly, and feast and sing together. Upon the death of a member the others give a loaf, and sing or pay for the singing of fifty psalms. There is an insurance fund to which every member contributes fourpence to make good losses of members, one shilling paid towards thief-catching; they are divided into companies of tens and into groups of a hundred, each with its own officers. There is also the Cnighten Gild peculiar to London, probably a military body for the defence of the City.

Costume of the Anglo-Saxons.—The prevailing costume for the men consisted of a short-sleeved tunic caught about the waist by a girdle or swathing band, over which was worn a cloak, which varied in size according to the age of the wearer.

Cross-gartered hose, and bracelets—often of rare workmanship—upon the arms completed the toilet. Between the costumes of rich and poor the only difference was in the richness of the tunic and the character of the adornments. Long hair was favoured, and the razor seems never to have been required.

The women wore long tunics, 'loose and high, and girt in round the waist,' overlaid by shorter tunics with very ample sleeves. Mantles with hoods surmounted all, and 'cover-chiefs,' covering both throat

and shoulders, were adjusted so as to encircle the face.

The women of the time concerned themselves chiefly in household matters, especially in making clothing. They spun and wove, carded wool, and embroidered for the greater part of the day. Hence the female side was the 'spindle' side, and the word spinster was something more in those days than a negative term.

Saxon women were as careful about their head-dress as the women of to-day. We learn that the wife loved to paint her cheeks with the red of antimony, and an 'iron' was used to 'twist the locks.' Perhaps these artifices were peculiar to the 'Smart Set' of Saxon London!

In the marriage ceremonies of the time we may trace the origin of some familiar terms. Ale figured prominently in the rejoicings, special ale being brewed for the occasion—the 'bride ale,' hence "bridal." The 'Brydgrimmer,' our "bridegroom," drank to the bride's health in this ale. "The best man" of Saxon times was surety for his friend in order that he should duly observe the bargain. For a bargain very literally it was, inasmuch as a sum duly agreed on was paid to the father before the wedding. The ring, looked upon as a symbol of slavery by many strong-minded ladies to-day, was given to the wife as a badge, not of slavery but of authority, she being considered ruler of the household. The ring, however, was not introduced until later Saxon times.

The Church in Saxon Times.—Throughout the Middle Ages the influence of the Church in every department of life was remarkable.

There was a church in nearly every street, and a

parish to every church; and the extent to which the priest interfered in the everyday life of the Londoner seems to us to-day monstrous and intolerable. Ecclesiastical law tried to regulate with irritating minuteness the morals of the people. Pride, envy, anger, despondency, luxury—to mention no other matters—were accounted crimes to which a penalty was attached. One would like to know how precisely the Church in particular instances made 'the punishment fit the crime.' There is certainly a Gilbertian flavour about punishing despondency by a course of bread and water until the criminal showed signs of spiritual exhilaration! Greed was punishable by fast and penance for three years. Not to go to bed was occasionally enjoined as a penance, when the sin was expiated by lying on the floor. Since, however, penances could be commuted for money, this points to an astute clerical move for refurnishing the coffers of the Church.

It is impossible to make too much of the political importance of the Bishop. In 900 we read that—'the bishop and the reeves who belong to London make, in the name of citizens, laws which were confirmed by the King, inasmuch as they related to the entire Kingdom.'

I know no more apt analogy to illustrate the position of the Church in Saxon society than that of Imperial Rome. Upon the Christian bishop had fallen the mantle of the Roman consul. Just as the Roman township had been the centre to which every part of a complex provincial organization attached itself, so the Catholic Church inheriting the imperial tradition was the one force which made for unity in early mediæval times. Tyrannous it might be, but, at any rate, it represented, as Imperial Rome had represented, all that could rightly be termed culture and learning. With the coming of

the Saxons, the Roman imperial tradition, as we have seen, was lost. Feeling the necessity for some unifying force, the Anglo-Saxons accepted the authority of the Catholic Church.

What was the immediate effect upon London?

The historian of the city is not concerned with the earliest Christian missionaries in England, those who came from Ireland and Iona. He must rather focus attention upon the effort associated with the names of Pope Gregory and Augustine.

Augustine left Rome in A.D. 596. From Canterbury he passed to Rochester, which had been a Roman station commanding the passage of the Medway. Thence he came to London. In so doing Augustine obeyed the express wish of Pope Gregory, whose plan was to divide England into two provinces with metropolitans of equal dignity at London and York.

But in London the Roman missionary was met by an unexpected difficulty. In Canterbury and Rochester he had had royal assistance. London, however, was upon the frontier of several Saxon Kingdoms. The influence of one Prince apparently neutralized that of the others. Finally, the death of Ethelbert was followed by a pagan reaction. This eventuated in the Londoners shutting their gates, as we have seen, upon their bishop, Mellitus. The authority of the Church was finally established by that forceful churchman, Wilfrid of York.

The chronicles relate how he brought stone-masons from Rome and travelled with "builders and skilled craftsmen" in his train. From that time onwards churches and monastic houses were built in rapid succession.

It will be worth while to picture one of the great

religious houses in the diocese of London in early Saxon times. No more instructive example can be taken than the Abbey of Barking, founded by the Bishop Erkenwald during his occupancy of the see of London. Erkenwald (who died 693) founded two monastic houses.

In view of what has been said as to the want of importance of the Town immediately after the coming of the Saxons, it is instructive to notice that neither was in London. For the one Erkenwald chose an up-river situation, at Chertsey; for the other, a down-river spot, at Barking.

Barking Abbey was founded in A.D. 666 as a home for the bishop's sister, Ethelburga. It included both monks and nuns among its inmates. A group of wooden buildings set within a great thorn hedge, would probably be the first impression gained by a traveller who came up to the Abbey. If he ventured to claim the hospitality of the house, he would have found that a common kitchen served the two branches of the Abbey. The nuns, however, had their own dormitories, infirmary, and oratory. If, perchance, our traveller's inquiries extended beyond mere externals, he would have discovered the secret of such an Abbey's success and influence. In those anarchic days men and women sought a place of repose. Such an house as Barking was "the veriest school of peace." The monastic cloisters gave back the possibility of culture which had been taken away when the Romans left Britain. Nowhere else could students follow their inclinations. Beyond the limits of a monastery scholarship was of no avail.

How different it was at Barking. If a monk composed a poem or a treatise, the *lection* during meal-times

gave him the opportunity for publication. If he were an artist, the finest illustrated manuscripts of their time were produced in Saxon monasteries.

Nor were these artistic and literary exercises confined to the monks. The nuns at Barking were equally intent upon knowledge, and equally in touch with the richest culture of their age. The fact can be readily proved from the famous treatise, "De Laudibus Virginitatis," which Aldhelm of Sherborne (640?-709) wrote specially for the women of Barking Abbey. The Bishop addresses his friends, with picturesque allusiveness, as "Flowers of the Church; sisters of monastic life, scholarly pupils . . . like unto bees you collect everywhere material for study." Indeed, the treatise appears to be really a rhetorical acknowledgment in return for research work which the good ladies of Barking had kindly done on his behalf. "Sometimes," writes Aldhelm, "you study the Prophets, sometimes the Books of the Law."

Aldhelm was a Greek scholar, and classical references abound in his pages. There is ample evidence that he appreciated the high level of culture attained by the inmates of Saxon nunneries in the seventh and eighth centuries.

Whatever may have been the case at other times and in other places, the nuns of Barking Abbey had little cause to complain of their lot. In many ways they were far happier than they would have been in the stress of the world beyond the Abbey gates. Save maternity, none of the ordinary privileges and occupations of women were denied them. Cooking was done by the nuns in turn. Even the librarian had her appointed week. When her turn came she was relieved of her duties among the books by another sister. At other

times there was the task of educating the daughters of the landed proprietors and the richer citizens. Then, again, the nuns made dresses and worked embroideries upon them. In Saxon times English needle-work had an European reputation. The records tell of two silk pallia, sent by Alfred as a present to the Pope, which excited general attention. Indeed, the kindly Aldhelm had cause to caution the nuns of Barking against the temptations incident upon too great skill with the needle. "Beware," he tells them, "of the vest of fine linen of violet colour, under a scarlet tunic with a hood, sleeves striped with silk and trimmed with fur."

The monastic houses represent one branch of the energy of the Catholic Church in Saxon London, but only one. Side by side with the "regulars" in the monasteries were the cathedral and parish priests. These were the "seculars." They lived in the *seculum*, or world, while the "regulars" obeyed a *regula*, or rule. Wherever the people gathered together there were the "seculars" in the midst.

The influence of the Church was ever-present. The market-cross gave a religious sanction to the bargains of the merchants and the traders. The Bishop's authority was invoked to ensure the weights and measures being true, just as in Ancient Greece the reputation of the temple priests assured an honest currency. Side by side with the inn, the refreshment booths, the smithy, and the storehouses arose the church. The Folk-moot, or assembly of citizens, met within the precincts of the Saxon Saint Paul's upon Ludgate Hill.

If the Abbey at Barking is the typical home of the "regulars" in Saxon London, the earliest

Cathedral of Saint Paul is the typical home of the "seculars."

The cathedral church of Saint Paul was served by "secular" clerics dwelling in the adjoining college of Saint Martin-le-Grand. The priests lived upon the endowments of the Minster much as the Fellows of one of the older Universities do to-day. They were not monks. They lived the common, but not the celibate, life. Indeed, they were at liberty to marry, and could both hold and inherit property.

Between the age of Alfred and the Norman Conquest a road ran direct from Aldgate to Ludgate. It passed the open market in West Chepe, and cut through Saint Paul's churchyard. The Saxon Cathedral lay on its south side, close to the spot where the Norman Church, "Old Saint Paul's," arose a few centuries later.

Doubtless, the earliest Saxon church upon Ludgate Hill was of wood. Later, when the wealth and importance of London increased, a stone building was put up to rival that erected "after the Roman manner" by Augustine at Canterbury. The exterior was quite unostentatious. The walls were of rubble with ashlar masonry at the angles. The roof was probably covered with slates laid in horizontal layers. The windows were round or triangular-headed. Nor had the interior the massive proportions of the later Norman church. The piers of the nave were short and crowned with square blocks of stone in place of the moulded capitals of a later age. Mouldings were rare. The few there were were of the simplest character and axe-hewn. The necessary note of vivid colour was supplied by the ample decorative hangings and mural paintings. For

the rest there was the beauty of the simple service, with its choral singing and its organ accompaniment.

Bede, speaking of an earlier age, describes a Saxon organ as follows :—

> A kind of tower made with various pipes, from which, by the blowing of bellows, a most copious sound is issued ; and that a becoming modulation may accompany this, it is furnished with certain wooden tongues from the interior part which the master's fingers, skilfully repressing, produce a grand, almost a sweet melody.

It will be seen that the Saxon churches in London between the age of Alfred and the coming of the Normans were simple in character and of comparatively small dimensions. A great step forward in London ecclesiastical architecture was made when Edward the Confessor laid the foundations of the Abbey church at Westminster.

Some centuries earlier an important Benedictine settlement had taken up its abode on Thorney Island—the sandbank lying between the Thames and the marshes which are now drained by the water in St. James's Park. A charter of King Offa of Mercia, dated 785, states, "I have given to St. Peter and the Lord's people dwelling in Torneis, in loco terribili, quod dicitur aet Uuestminster."

After the Danish invasion King Edgar and the famous Dunstan founded the Abbey anew. At that time the monks owned a large estate, which stretched from Oxford Street to the Thames, and from the Fleet in the East to the Tyburn in the West. Unfortunately, most of the land was marsh, though there was some

good pasture land to the south of the line of the present Oxford Street.

The fortunes of the monastery, however, improved when Canute built a lordly "King's House" on Thorney Island under the shadow of the Benedictine Monastery. The Danish monarch's choice of a home led Edward the Confessor also to look with favour upon the community which dwelt within an arrow's flight of his palace. When his advisory Council forbade the pilgrimage which Edward had vowed to make to the tomb of Saint Peter at Rome, the king decided instead to restore and re-endow the Apostle's monastery in Thorney Island.

The result was the first English church built after the manner of the great cruciform cathedrals which were becoming general in Northern Europe. Only the foundations and the lower parts of some walls of Edward the Confessor's buildings now remain. For this reason a review of Saxon London does not call for any detailed description of the Abbey as it is to-day. That belongs rather to the history of Plantagenet London. King Edward did not even live to witness the consecration of the Abbey Church. At the time he lay dying in the King's House. The first great event in the newly consecrated building was the burial of its founder. The second was the coronation of the usurper—Harold. With the words of the priestly blessing bestowed upon the last of the Anglo-Saxon Kings during the coronation, this survey of pre-Norman London may properly close. They brought a curse rather than a blessing to Harold. As words of ill-omen they suggest the beginning of a new era.

"May God crown thee with the crown of glory,

and with the honour of justice and the labour of fortitude; and, by the virtue of our benediction and the various fruit of good works thou mayest attain to the crown of the Everlasting Kingdom through His bounty, whose Kingdom endures for ever."

CHAPTER III

THE LONDON OF FITZ-STEPHEN

London, thou art the Flower of cities all.—WILLIAM DUNBAR.

"WILLIAM King greets William Bishop and Gosfrith Portreeve, and all the burgesses within London, French and English, friendly. And I give you to know that I will that ye be all law worthy that ye were in Eadward's day. And I will that every child be his father's heir after his father's day. And I will not suffer any man to offer you any harm—God keep you."

The famous charter of William I. is remarkable in two ways. In the first place, it is a testimony to the important position London was occupying—a recognition of its healthy, nascent municipal life. Secondly, it shows the shrewd sense of the Norman Conqueror. When we recall the broken promises of Rufus and of Stephen, it is worth noting that the Conqueror was, on the whole, faithful to his agreement.

He had political reasons for being so. There was a strong Norman element existing already in the City; and its importance as a trading centre depended largely upon its municipal stability. So he benefited the City by leaving it alone.

A proof of the confidence which men reposed in William I., may be found in the indifference with which

the people regarded his building of a castle which developed into the Tower of London.

In this reference to the Bishop and the Portreeve, we have an illustration of the alliance between Church and State which is so familiar a feature of mediæval times. At this time the influence of the Church predominated. In later times, when the Portreeve becomes the Mayor, and the City snatches civic self-government from the reluctant grasp of the Plantagenets, the Church has to rest content with a subsidiary position.

At the time of the charter, the forerunner of the Mayor is no very important individual. The nature and character of his office are by no means clear, but his position in the walled city was to some extent analogous with that of the Shire reeve in the country.

Another point in this charter merits attention. 'I will that ye be all law worthy.' That is to say, they were to have the privileges of freemen in the courts of justice with power to appeal to the verdict of their equals. A 'law worthy' man could call upon his friends to justify him. This panel of friends, called 'compurgators,' who spoke out of their own knowledge, is the germ from which sprang, at a later time, the modern jury system.

The charter is valuable, not because it introduced innovations, but because it confirmed a state of things which existed at the close of Saxon times. Finally, it reminds us of the presence within the walls of a considerable Norman element alongside of the English burgesses.

While William was harsh and autocratic, his son was violently tyrannical. It is the weak man who makes

the worst despot. And Rufus had neither the stability nor wise prevision of his father. None the less he found it advisable to secure protection for life and property in the City, and he repaired the bridge which had been nearly destroyed by a flood.

The charter of Henry I. to the City marked a step in advance. From the time of William onwards, the history of London resolves into a long struggle between King and freemen for self-government. In the earlier phases, we have the struggle to obtain self-government; later there comes the struggle to maintain it.

Henry's charter absolved the citizens from feudal payments, and gave them leave to appoint their own Justiciar or law officer. They were to be allowed to hold Middlesex to farm at a rent of £300 per annum, and to appoint their own sheriff over it.

It has been urged that the result of Henry's grant of Middlesex was not so much to render the City independent of the shire as to make the shire subject to the City.

From Roman times onward, the problem of the suburbs has been always to the fore. Attempts have been made to control the growth of the suburbs, but "neither neglect nor care, neither desertion nor protection has availed to stop it." One of these experiments was made in the very charter with which we are dealing. We do not know the exact character of the claim which the London citizens had upon Middlesex, but in granting them the farm of Middlesex, the King certainly acknowledged its validity.

It may be that the object of the charter was to give the citizens a greater control over the suburbs. But in this it was ineffectual, as the rich pasturage of Middlesex had passed into the hands of the great ecclesiastical

corporations—notably that of St. Paul's and St. Peter's (Westminster). The King, when he granted to London the jurisdiction he had exercised in Middlesex, had no power to grant lands along with it. For, to use Mr. Loftie's words, 'The city supplied the population to colonise the wastes and woods; but the Church supplied the houses for them to dwell in, marked out the streets, controlled the direction of each fresh stream of emigrants.'

All that we can make sure of then, is, that certain rights of jurisdiction over Middlesex were granted to the citizens. And to this day the grant of Henry remains in force; the citizens electing the sheriffs both for city and county.

It was the policy of the Norman Kings to foster every remnant of local independence in order to check the tyranny of the great Lords. Particularly was this the case with Henry, whose title to the throne was dubious, and who found it advisable to cement an alliance with his people. The charters were the outcome of good political sagacity.

The popular and unstable Stephen found a welcome in London, where he promised everything and gave nothing. Matilda had been chosen by the nobility, but London, ever independent, declined to abide by this decision, and Stephen was elected by the City. From this time London takes the political lead in affairs relating to the Kingdom.

Without following the sieges and counter-sieges which mark Stephen's contest with Matilda, it is interesting to note that use was made of the Tower by the King, both as a residence and a fortress.

The Government of the City

(*a*) *The Governors.*—The early governor of the City is the Saxon Portreeve; he is succeeded in Norman times by the Vice-Comes. The Mayoralty, which, as we shall see, was wrung reluctantly from John in his brother's lifetime, is not of any great importance until well on in the thirteenth century. The King's officer, the Justiciar, practically controls the City. This office seems to have arisen out of the necessity of some one to represent the King during his frequent visits abroad. The office, however, fell into disuse in the thirteenth century. The Justiciarship of London was created by the charter of Henry I.

As early as the reign of Stephen, Londoners, exasperated by the King's perfidy, had formed a commune on the French pattern—an organization quite new to England, which was controlled by elective Magistrates. But nothing came of this first attempt.

What was the Commune?

The Commune was an association, a sworn confederacy, formed by the inhabitants of a town who desired independence. Already in various parts of France this system could be seen at work early in the twelfth century.

In 1191, during the struggle between John (the King's brother) and Longchamp (the King's representative), London named the Commune as the price of her support. Once before she had tried to realise it, and failed. Now she meant to seize the opportunity that presented itself.

The constitution of this Commune was somewhat vague; but we know that the representative of the City was to be the Mayor (Maire), and this official was to be

assisted by "good men" (probi homines). At its best the communal government was much in the nature of a civic oligarchy, and not of much value to poorer citizens; but it served, at any rate, as a rallying-ground for those who disputed the arbitrary interference of the King. John never meant to allow it to worry him; it served its purpose at the time as a popular political move, and that was all that the monarch cared about.

(*b*) *The Governed.*—The Saxons did not take kindly to town life, and it is therefore first under the Norman Kings that we find so much attention given to civic government. Here we find the merits and defects of Feudalism illustrated. The strict orderliness of the Feudal system is apparent in the multitude of laws framed for the protection of trade and the citizen's person; but the interference with personal liberty was so excessive in many cases as to make the life of a Norman citizen exceedingly uncomfortable. There were laws compelling each citizen, whether he would or no, to be bail and surety for a neighbour's good behaviour, over whom it was perhaps impossible for him to exercise the least control; laws forbidding him to make his market for the day until the purveyors for the King and the great lords of the land had stripped the stalls of all that was choicest and best; laws forbidding him to pass the city walls for the purpose of meeting his own purchased goods; laws compelling him to deal with certain persons and communities only, or within the precincts of certain localities only; laws dictating, under severe penalties, what sums and no more he was to pay to his servants and artisans; laws which drove his dog out of the streets, while permitting "genteel dogs" to roam at large; more than this, laws which

occasionally went so far as to lay down rules at what hour he was to walk in the streets, and incidentally, what he was to eat and drink.[1]

Early in the evening the gates were closed; and when the Curfew bell was rung, all lights (including fires) had perforce to be extinguished. Henry I. relieved the irritating rigidity of some of these regulations, which were by no means peculiar to England. And, it may be added that at the close of the fourteenth century, when the citizen had a very fair measure of liberty, there were prevalent on the Continent, where Feudalism died more slowly, many of these shackling laws and customs.

The Buildings.—Norman London resembled Saxon London in general appearance. Wooden huts crowded together, low and insecure so far as fire and tempest were concerned, continued up to the time of Henry III. Thatched with straw or reeds, they were especially liable to destruction by fires; and although London was more fortunate in this particular than some mediæval cities, she suffered badly from time to time.

A fire in Stephen's reign destroyed St. Paul's, and led to more care and attention; but it was not until after the particularly destructive fire of 1212, which partially destroyed London Bridge—at that time a wooden structure—and was responsible for considerable loss of life, that certain regulations of a compulsory character were introduced. These regulations enacted that every one who built a house was strictly charged not to cover it with reeds, rushes, stubble, or straw, but only with tiles, shingles, boards, or leads. Occupiers

[1] See Riley's Introduction to *Liber Albus* (Rolls series), 1859.

of large houses were instructed to keep one or two ladders for their own use and for their neighbour's in the event of a sudden outbreak of fire; and in summer time they were to keep a barrel or large earthen vessel full of water before the house, for the purpose of quenching fire, unless there was a reservoir of spring water in the courtyard.

A destructive fire in Stephen's reign caused serious damage to Winchester. She never recovered her position, and henceforth London was left without a rival.

Shops in early Norman times were open to the weather, and thus considerable damage was done to goods. To obviate this, warehouses were built, called selds, where many goods were stored.

Windows were usually only narrow slits; glass was rare, except among the wealthy. Iron bars served as the only protection by day, and for night there were wooden shutters.

Inside the nobleman's home was the square courtyard, where the armed retainers assembled. The Long Hall served for dining-room, Justice hall, and bedroom. The family were privileged to sleep upstairs in a gaunt, repellent chamber, where the Lord and Lady took the choicest bed, the rest of the family sleeping round the room, like school children in a dormitory. Downstairs, in the hall, rested the retainers and the dogs. Falcons were more privileged, and occupied the Lord's sleeping apartment.

The Normans accommodated themselves speedily to Saxon costume; and although their own closely-cropped hair contrasted with the flowing locks of the Saxon, many came to prefer the Saxon fashion. This was a cause of complaint to the Clergy; and it is related

that on a certain Easter a priest, finding denunciation ineffective, produced scissors from his pocket and cropped the hair of the entire congregation.

Historical investigation has brought to light some curious illustrations of royal encroachments upon the private life of citizens. The early Kings in their peregrinations, wishing to make their retainers as comfortable as possible, instructed the Marshal of the Household to seize the best houses for their dependents to stay in. The method employed reminds one of the ruse in "Ali Baba," for the Marshal, having selected his houses, caused them to be marked with chalk; the inmates were summarily ejected and the retinue duly installed.

Dwellers in the City of London were supposed to be exempt from these irritating encroachments. Their charters protected them, but many attempts were made by the King to evade the rule, and in Westminster, at any rate, Henry III. caused much inconvenience and trouble by high-handed procedure of this sort.

The Mayoralty and Angevin Kings.—The first public recognition of the citizens of London as a body corporate took place then in 1191, when their Commune was conceded them, and the Saxon Portreeve gave place to the French Mayor.

According to the chronicle, the first mention of the Mayor occurs in the first year of Richard I. "Henry Fitz-Eylwin of Londenstane was made Mayor of London; who was the first Mayor of the City and continued to be such Mayor to the end of his life, that is to say, for nearly twenty-five years." In 1200 mention is made of a Court of Aldermen: "five and twenty of the more discreet men of the city were chosen

and sworn to take counsel on behalf of the City—together with the Mayor."

The power of the City is illustrated in the reign of John by the care taken by the Barons when drafting the Great Charter to remember the City's liberties, and the name of Firz-Walter, Castellain of the City, and of the Mayor, appear among those appointed to see that the terms of the charter were strictly carried out. To make matters additionally secure, the barons demanded and obtained the custody of the city and of the Tower, and reserved the right to make war on the King if he failed to keep his word.

Social London in the Twelfth Century

Henry II.—Henry the Second was in a stronger position than his predecessors, for when he came to the throne in 1154 he had incurred no debt to baronial factions, as had been the case with Stephen. More than that, he had a clear title, and was affected by none of the foreign prepossessions which had made his forerunners Norman Princes rather than English Kings. He was an excellent business man, firm and clear-sighted; and while he made good use of able ministers he suffered none of them to gain the upper hand.

He was thoroughly English in his sympathies, and throughout his reign endeavoured to subordinate the feudal system to national interests.

As an example of this, we have only to look at the Assize of Arms (1181). The Norman Kings before him had relied on mercenaries to supplement the insufficient feudal levies. But the English hated the foreign soldiers, and so Henry II. relied almost entirely upon a revival of the Saxon Fyrd—the national militia of pre-Norman times. This was not only more satis-

factory than the mercenary army, it was preferable to the feudal army, insomuch as it was more reliable. It affords an illustration of the growing tendency to connect local and central administration.

London did well under this King. With customary shrewdness he confirmed the charter of his grandfather, and although he showed from time to time a tendency to bring the citizens under more direct subservience to the Crown, he did nothing to interfere practically with their 'liberties.' And the City was on the whole excellently governed.

William Fitz-Stephen, clerk to Thomas à Becket, an inmate in his family, and one of the witnesses of the murder, is our great authority for the life of the City at this period. He speaks of London as holding its head higher than all others; its fame was wider known; its wealth and merchandise extended further than any other; it was the Capital of the Kingdom.

He describes the sports on the Thames, vividly and picturesquely:[1] "In the Easter holidays they play at a game resembling a naval engagement. A target is firmly fixed to the trunk of a tree which is fixed in the middle of a river; and in the prow of a boat, driven along by oars and the current, a young man who is to strike the target with his lance. If in hitting it, he breaks his lance and keeps his position unmoved, he gains his point, and attains his desire; but if his lance be not shriven by the blow he is tumbled into the river, and his boat passes by, driven along by its own momentum. Two boats, however, are placed there,

[1] The "Survey" of London, which serves as preface to a *Life of Thomas à Becket*. He says, 'I was a fellow citizen with my Lord.' He died about 1191.

one on each side of the target, and in them a number of young men to take up the striker when he first emerges from the stream." Meanwhile the spectators watch the sight—as they do now a University Boat Race from bridge and banks.

Holiday Amusements of the City.—There were Miracle Plays—where representation took place of miracles wrought by 'holy confessors,' or those in which martyrs had achieved fame by their fortitude.

Then as for pastimes, there were many of a vigorous character, such as have always appealed to Englishmen of all ages.

After dinner, the youth of the city 'address themselves' to football. The scholars of each school have their peculiar ball, and the particular trades have most of them their's.

The fathers come to watch their sons, and are, as Fitz-Stephen says, 'as youthful as the youngest'; "their natural heat seeming to be revived at the sight of so much agility," from which we gather that they were scarce content with remaining spectators.

Less admirable seems to have been the custom on Shrove Tuesday, when the boys of the respective schools brought to the masters each one his fighting cock, and they are 'indulged all the morning' with the edifying sight of cock-fights in the schoolroom.

Fitz-Stephen gives an elaborate picture of the pastime of sliding on the ice, with insistent particularity. "Some taking a small run for an increment of velocity, place their feet at the proper distance, and are carried sliding sideways a great way; . . . it some-

times follows that moving swiftly on so slippery a plain they all fall down headlong!" Somehow or other we are reminded of the classic description of Mr. Pickwick and his party disporting themselves on the ice.

Skating also is in favour. Some "more expert in these amusements" placed certain bones under their feet and with the help of a pole shod with iron, they propelled themselves along and are carried "with a velocity equal to the flight of a bird or a bolt discharged from a cross bow." Which description makes one somewhat dubious of the chronicler's sense of speed.

Many of the citizens take delight in hunting and fowling. Every Friday in Lent there are tournaments with disarmed lances; and at Easter, when the river is 'less inclement,' there are the water sports, as described above.

During the spring, bears, bulls, badgers, horses also, are baited. In this picture, which is drawn entirely from the pages of Fitz-Stephen, we have a tolerably clear picture of the lighter side of London life.

During the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, the social diversions take on a more picturesque and poetic complexion; but of these, described by the old Tudor chronicler, Stowe, there is no occasion to speak here.

So much for the main lines of social and political life in the period after the Conquest, which covers the time of Fitz-Stephen.

What of the status of the Catholic Church?

The Church had done much in pre-Norman times to improve the general spirit of the people; to soften their fierce passions, and to humanise their life.

At the same time it must be admitted that the close contact between Church and State had re-acted to some extent injuriously upon the clergy. Virtue had gone out of them for the healing of men's souls, but the active part which they took in political life caused, in many cases, a change from the spiritual insight that they claimed to the material foresight, which as a profession they condemned.

In Saxon times the union between Church and State had been intimate, but, perhaps, not so essentially organic as it became in the years following the Conquest.

The Abbey at Barking was a world in itself, away from the turmoil of the market square. Though this could not be said of the see of London, the English bishops in pre-Norman days in many cases ruled from places remote from the chief centres of population in the diocese.

The Norman ecclesiastics, who came over with William the Conqueror, perceived the weakness inherent in the earlier system. The council of London, which met in 1075, decreed the removal of bishoprics from the villages to the towns.

When Henry I. came to the throne in A.D. 1100, the times were ripe for a great extension of the religious system, both on its monastic and its "secular" side. London shared to the full in the fruits of the religious enthusiasm which was aroused. The foundations of a great cathedral were laid upon the summit of Ludgate Hill, and the church known as "Old St. Paul's" arose. When Fitz-Stephen wrote his itinerary of London in 1174, there were no fewer than one hundred and thirty-nine churches in the metropolis.

Let us imagine the appearance of the City.

The dwelling-houses, for the most part, were of wood, the streets narrow; then came a little square—a group of religious houses and a stone church in the midst. The typical Norman church was of cruciform shape, with a low tower at the intersection of the nave, the choir, and the transept. Externally, it was of small account. It was upon the interior that the monks and priests impressed their character. Low circular piers, with short, solid, cushioned capitals, formed the nave. A dark aisle on either side. Above, a gallery, and the columns and arches of the triforium. Then a row of round-headed windows, and a flat-timbered roof. In the middle of the church a screen, separating the place of the churchmen from the place of the main body of worshippers. Finally, a little distance from the east end, the altar, forming with the eastern wall a retro-choir, through which the gorgeously-arrayed processions of clerics could pass.

A beautiful example of an early Norman church can still be seen by every Londoner—the tiny chapel of St. John the Evangelist, in the Keep of the Tower. Four massive columns flank either side of the nave, and form the two aisles. Four more divide the apse from the nave. Two passages, one on the south side and another in the gallery of the triforium, led to the King's rooms in other parts of the "White Tower." A warrior's chapel, some will exclaim, grim in its present-day garb of sullen grey. True, but we have to recall the glass, with its mellow radiance, the finely-wrought lamps, the coloured images, the embroidered hangings, and the gilt and painted mouldings. The chapel of St. John is more than a soldier's church. These gaily coloured decorations suggest the trappings of a Church Militant, confident of its position and its power.

But an even more characteristic example of Norman ecclesiastical architecture has been preserved to Londoners. The Priory Church of St. Bartholomew in Smithfield witnesses to the many-sided activities of the monastic houses in London more completely than the little church at the Tower. St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, belongs to a rather later date than the chapel of St. John, having been commenced about fifty years after the Conquest. The story of its foundation forms an epitome of the many ways in which the Catholic Church in twelfth-century London came into contact with the every-day life of the citizens.

The Priory of St. Bartholomew was founded by Rahere, Minstrel to King Henry I., in the early years of the twelfth century. In 1116, Rahere had so far abandoned the frivolity of youth as to be filling the stall of Chamberlayne's Wood at St. Paul's. In other words, he was one of the thirty canons engaged in the service of the Cathedral.

In 1120, when visiting the scene of St. Paul's martyrdom at Rome, Rahere was struck down with malaria. In his fevered sleep a vision of the physician apostle, Bartholomew, was vouchsafed to him. In return for a promise of restoration to health, Rahere vowed a hospital and a church to the Saint's memory. He joined the Order of Canons Regular of St. Augustine, which had already established the Priory of Holy Trinity, Aldgate, and returned to London.

Rahere's first step was to consult his friend, Richard de Belmeis, the then Bishop of London, who promised to interest Henry I. The result of the Bishop's interference was a grant of land in the "smooth field" (Smithfield)—a waste heath to the north of London Wall.

First the Hospital of St. Bartholomew was put up. The original building was a long, lofty hall with aisles on either side, the beds of the women being on the one side and those of the men on the other.

In 1133, Rahere obtained a charter from "Henry, King of Englishmen," for a fresh foundation of the Order of Canons Regular of St. Augustine.

"And it shall have," so runs King Henry's charter, "socc and sacc and thol and theme, and infogheneteof; and all liberties and free customs and acquittances in all things which belong to the same church, in wood and in plain, in meadows and pastures, in waters and mills, in ways and paths, in pools and vineyards, and marshes and fisheries, in granges and copses, within and without, and in all places now and for ever."

It needs no knowledge of the meaning of such terms as "socc, sacc," and "infogheneteof" to realise that the King's charter to the Priory of St. Bartholomew could not well have been couched in more generous terms.

The church, cloisters, chapter-house, infirmary, refectory, great close, little close, and the other monastic buildings, were put up as quickly as might be. The church of St. Bartholomew — the finest example of Norman architecture in London — can still be seen. The eastern bays of the choir were probably completed before Rahere's death. The rest of the church was finished by Prior Thomas of St. Osyth, who ruled the Priory from 1143 to 1174.

There are seasons when the unholy stir of the City becomes over-troublesome. Then is the time to seek out the old church, and from the shadow of its many columns, to re-create the scene when the Canons in their black cassocks, white rochets, and black hooded cloaks

moved up the central nave or through the dark aisles.

A vision more full of grace can readily be conjured up—grace was not a Norman virtue—but not a memory of greater significance in the history of London or of greater potency among the forces at work in mediæval England.

One other feature in St. Bartholomew's remains for notice—the tomb of the founder, with its simple inscription :—

Hic jacet Raherus primus canonicus et primus prior hujus ecclesiae.

The vaulted canopy above was added in the fifteenth century, but there is no reason to doubt that the recumbent figure of Rahere and the figures of the two monks on either side date from the century in which the Prior died. He lies with shaven crown, clad in the habit of his Order. The Latin Bibles in the hands of the little kneeling monks are open at the fifty-first chapter of Isaiah—"For the Lord shall comfort Zion : He will comfort all her waste places ; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord."

Truly an apt description of the life's work of the man who founded the Hospital of Bartholomew and the Augustinian Priory amid the boggy wastes of the "smooth field" upon the confines of Norman London.

Much more might be written of the fair, which King Henry granted to the Augustinian monks ; of such men as Rahere's first Hospitaller, Alfune, who built St. Giles', Cripplegate—Alfune, who used to go daily into the shambles of the town, begging scraps of meat for the sick. Of the learned John Mirfield,

who wrote the famous medical treatise, *Breviarium Bartholomaei.* It is sufficient if these stray jottings about a single religious house recall the history of many more as interesting and as famous. Close by the Charterhouse was the Priory of St. John of Jerusalem, founded about the year A.D. 1100, and the neighbouring Nunnery of St. Mary, which lay on the slope of a hill running down to the Fleet River. The list could be readily extended. The essential thing is to regard the Catholic Church as an organic part of Norman London, giving to the people, by reason of its own unity, a certain solidarity ; above all, providing a means of education for all who cared to avail themselves of it.

CHAPTER IV

THE LONDON OF LANGLAND AND CHAUCER

> Then I hyed me into East Chepe,
> One cried ribbs of beef and many a pye,
> Pewter pots they clattered on a heepe,
> There was harp, pype, and mynstrelysee.
>
> *London Lycpenny* (1450).

In the early Middle Ages, Poetry and Music were one and indivisible. The ancient Bard found successors in the Minstrels, who delighted our Teutonic ancestors at the close of the day. Saxon and Dane alike revered and loved these singers who sang to the harp their own songs, stirring the ready emotions of these primitive men by tales of heroic daring. The minstrel was no mere musician, he was also a poet. In those times, he who felt the 'divine afflatus' could not ease himself in limited editions made elegant by broad margins and tasteful binding. Sing 'by request' he might and did: but to publish 'by request,' even in the pre-Caxton method of manuscripts wrought with clerkly skill, was not a proceeding that was favoured.

Among the Danes these minstrels were known as 'scalds,' that is, 'smoothers and polishers of language': their skill was looked upon as heaven-born, and the origin of their art attributed to Odin. To be a minstrel, therefore, was to be a person in high repute—one

rewarded with gifts and sought after by kings and nobles.

Soon after the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity it is probable that a special impetus was given to the study of literature; and men arose other than oral poets, who would use their leisure in the devising of verses. Monastic retirement favoured the poet's vocation, and about the tenth century the Poet and the Minstrel are distinct personages.

The Minstrel flourished throughout the Middle Ages, and was smiled upon and petted by most of the Kings. He had an excellent time under the first two Edwards, and in the reign of Richard (whose musical proclivities Shakespeare touches on) a court of Minstrels was established. The gallant victor at Agincourt relied upon the minstrel's inspiration before setting forth to France, and on Feast Days the minstrels fared especially well.

In the fourteenth century the Minstrels frequent the wayside inn, and entertain the travellers, and William Langland affirms in his "Piers the Plowman" that there are only two amusements at table: to listen to the minstrels, and when they are silent to talk religion and scoff about Mysteries. And we gather from Chaucer that Music was customary at the tables of the rich :—

> . . . After the thridde course
> . . . His mynstrales playe
> Byfore him . . . deliciously.

Under the Tudors they fell gradually from their high estate, until we find, in the thirty-fifth year of Elizabeth, a statute enacting that 'minstrels wandering abroad' were to be included among 'rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars.' From this slur upon his reputation the minstrel, unlike the actor, never recovered.

Thus fared the Minstrel. What of his kinsman, the Poet?

With the exception of that quaint mixture of history, epic, and romance—entitled *Beowulf*, fashioned in the eighth century from the sagas of the Northmen, there is practically no English poetry until we come to the fourteenth century.

In the centuries following the Norman Conquest, men's thoughts were diverted into other channels. The impulse given to historical learning by the cultured Bede is distinctly traceable in the Saxon Chronicle, and later in the glowing pictures of Fitz-Stephen. Roger Bacon, in the twelfth century, expresses the philosophical thought of the age: but the Romantic spirit—when not voiced in the songs of the minstrels—finds an outlet only in Wales in the Trions and the Mabinogion—early versions of the Arthurian legends.

The thirteenth century, so remarkable in England for its forceful, social, and political organisation, is singularly barren in poetry.

Latin was the language in which the cultured man wrote: and French was the language spoken in polite society. The Saxon tongue languished; and the first great writer to infuse fresh literary life into it is William Langland (*c.* 1330-1400). His even greater contemporary, Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400), while keeping to the old Saxon tongue, strengthened and beautified it by mingling with the rough, vigorous Saxon the smoother and more flexible vocabulary and literary methods which he had learned in France and in Italy.

The social History of London in the fourteenth century can well be told from the works of these two writers. In their pages mediæval London starts into being again.

Langland

For the darker, the more troublous side of life, we turn to "Long Will"; since in the pages of "Piers the Plowman" we are brought into contact with the sorrows of the poor and are made to realise something of the bitter spirit which brought about the socialistic revolution of 1381.

How different in appearance were the two great painters of Social Life. Langland, tall and lank, proud and moody; a man slow of speech but keen in observation—a sombre, melancholy figure stalking through the London streets with his tonsured head and priestly robe. Chaucer—portly and genial, less concerned to moralize than his contemporary, content to paint the varied life of his day as he saw it; a tolerant, humorous soul—half poet, half man of the world.

Inasmuch as the Vision of "Piers the Plowman" precedes the *Canterbury Tales* by about ten years, we may well consider that remarkable poem first of all, and note what light it throws upon the times.

Probably of low extraction, Langland was from his earliest years familiar with the poor folk both of the city and of the country. Living in London for many years, he was not of London, and often did he turn wistfully in imagination to the green hills of Malvern and the peasant folk that he loved so well. In Malvern and London alternately he spent the greater part of his life—but like De Quincey in his Edinburgh days he was ever yearning for the spacious tranquillity of the country side. There was a good deal of the genuine vagabond about him (despite his austerity), for he was a restless, inquisitive spirit, wandering over the fields

of knowledge, touching this or that subject,—though never anything for long,—French and Latin, history, law, theology, astronomy, romance; one and all he sampled with restless diligence. He was athirst for knowledge.

> Alle the sciences under sunne—and alle the sotyle craftes,
> I wolde I knewe and couth kyndely in myne herte!

But he was not of the stuff of which patient scholars are made, and he knew it.

His mental alertness had interested others in him, and of patrons he had no few. But after a while these died, leaving him to look out for himself. We find him living in Cornhill, poor and unhappy, with his wife Catherine and daughter Nicolette. Too old to form fresh friendships—he had never been a companionable man—he strides the streets with bitterness in his heart. Small wonder that when he looked out upon the world, it is not the wealthy with their smiling faces and rich garments which touch his imagination, but those whom poverty and disease have made their own.

True, he had one solace—his book—for it became part of himself. It is a book which he never finished: one feels that into it was poured his life-blood: all his hopes and despairs, his sorrow and aspiration, his anger and his compassion went into these Visions.

To the sound of murmuring waters he fell asleep. Maybe he was at Malvern when he wrote, maybe the fresh, rustic summer morn which he pictured was seen by the inward eye alone, in his impoverished home near St. Paul's; we do not know. Anyway, like another famous writer of allegory, he fell asleep, and in a 'field ful of folkes' he saw the men and women of his dream—knights, monks, preachers, peasants, cooks that cry out, "Hote pyes hote," and "mystrelles" that

sell "glee." And the object of their journey, like that of the more famous journey from the City of Destruction, was the search of Truth and of Good.

To Chaucer's mind mediæval English life was a rich comedy; it was a sordid tragedy to Langland.

Chaucer's writings prelude the abounding vitality and eagerness, the colour and movement of the Renascence. Langland helps us rather to understand the Reformation—not because he was himself a radical reformer, for indeed, he lacked the large view of a Wycliffe and the elemental directness of a John Ball—but because he understood those latent passions, those fiery discontents of the demos that welled to the surface in 1381, and seethed over the old conventions of political and social life in the time of the Stuarts.

There are interesting side-lights upon some city customs in Langland's writing. We gather how the tradesman's apprentices stood at the shop doors shouting out to possible customers and trying to tempt them in, much as the showman does in the country fair. At the tavern door could be heard, 'Whyte wyn of Gascoigne'; while the cook would insinuate, 'Gowe, dyne, gowe,' which being interpreted means, 'Come and have some dinner.'

Cornhill, Tyburn, East Chepe, Smithfield, and other familiar London haunts are referred to by the poet; he speaks of the Law Courts at Westminster, alludes to the recent suppression of the Templars, and deals with considerable detail upon the habits of the clergy and merchant classes. We hear about the 'pryvee parlour' and the 'chambre with a chymenie' which was coming into fashion. Earlier, the hall was the biding place for the head of the house and the members of the family.

'Chambres' were sleeping places, and the "parlour" originally meant a place for private chat. It was often used for business purposes, but none thought of making it a living room. In Langland's time, however, the hall was used less and less, and the parlour was no longer reserved for special parlances. All this meant less feasting and good-fellowship in the big hall; and so this innovation was looked upon as selfishness on the part of the rich man.

Now hath ech riche a rule
To eten by hymselve
In the pryvee parlour.

He reproaches—

Bochiers and cokes[1]
For these are men on this molde
That most harm wercheth[2]
To the pooere people
That percelmale briggen[3]
For they empoisone the people
Pryveliche and ofte.[4]

Also he condemns the rich people for 'regrating'—that was the custom of buying up provisions and retailing them at great profit to the poor.

His mention of 'breed' (bread) from 'Stratforde' reminds us of the fame which Stratford-at-Bow enjoyed in mediæval times for supplying bread to the City. And the bakers were important men.

Such are a few of the points of interest to the student of London Life on which Langland touches.

The Black Death had sounded the knell of feudalism, for it had afforded an opportunity for the free labourer to demand better wages—now that the supply of labour

[1] Butchers and cooks.
[2] Worketh.
[3] Piecemeal bring.
[4] Privately and often.

was so limited—and it gave an impetus to the serf to struggle for his freedom.

Langland, however, though the spokesman for the labouring classes, favoured the old class divisions and reviled the insurgents of 1381 : in these matters he is reactionary. He wants reform, but within the Church. He is less drastic in his proposals for clerical reform than Wycliffe. Though satirizing Pardoners and Friar Confessors, he expresses belief in Penance and Absolution, and sighs for the obedience of an age that has passed.

Wycliffe disbelieved in the doctrine of Penance and Absolution—in this matter being in accord with the Reformers of the generation that succeeded. In fact, he scarcely realised that in the desperate picture which he drew of corruption in Church and State and in the oppression by the rich, he had stated a case for reform far more drastic and thorough than those measures which he advocated.

On some points, however, Langland was thoroughgoing, viz. in his dislike of Jewish bankers, and his conviction that the great wealth of the Church was harmful to her. The Knaves who traffic in "pardons"; the friars who make a pretence of religion; Knights to whom fighting was merely an excuse to express their lust for blood; the countless men and women, both in town and country, whose lives were dominated by no great principle or ideal—all these he lashed. The brilliant insincerity which, despite its superficial charm, makes the flaunting fourteenth century in England compare so unfavourably with the two centuries preceding; the rottenness, which was breaking up all the real strength and greatness of the Middle Ages, Langland saw with marvellous clearness. Where can truth be found? This is his cry. And so the Messengers: Reason,

Repentance, and Hope—help in the search for Truth, guided by Piers himself. Piers insists upon manual labour as the first essential; and extols this with the enthusiasm of a Thoreau.

The World is at hand to wheedle and bribe the honest worker, the World in the person of Lady Meed, attractive but heartless, whose name itself savours of bribery. But on Lady Meed and her doings, and the revelations of the Knight's Conscience, there is no need to dwell in this brief sketch. We are more concerned with the picture of the crowd hurrying through the streets of London, and of the vivid picture of the revellers in the City Tavern. Here we have quarrels or discussions, and heavy drinking, and the noisy ritual of mirth for which Taverns in every Age are renowned; the hermit, the cobbler, the clerk of the Church, the hangman, and the harlot met together.

We may note how "Gyle" is made welcome by the merchants, and serves in their shops; how that the Pardoners take pity on "Lyer," and send him to church to sell pardons.

The scene shifts constantly and unexpectedly from town to country, from London to Malvern; vigorous and pungent homilies break in upon the action of the story, and the upshot of all is that the Poet bids us 'lerne to love' as the one cure for the ills of life.

Chaucer

There is nothing of the dreamer about Chaucer—nothing of the stern moralist and social reformer. Like Shakespeare, he makes it his business in the *Canterbury Tales* to paint life as he sees it, and leaves others to draw the moral.

His early years were spent in London by the side of the Wall-brook stream, and near the broad and clear flowing Thames. A short distance away was London Bridge, not long rebuilt of stone, with its jostling crowd of dwellings, its medley of piers, its famous Chapel of St. Thomas. On the side remote from the City was the picturesque suburb of Southwark, abounding in merry-making hostelries and flanked by green pastures and pleasant woods. And of the manners and customs of the London of his youth and manhood, Chaucer's writings are full. There is little to be said about the pastimes of the people which cannot be found in his work.

The great festival of the year was May Day. Dickens has enshrined for us the spirit of Christmas; and curious historians of the future may turn to "The Carol" and "The Chimes" for an authentic account of the one joyous festival of the grave Victorian era. And Chaucer has done for May Day and Plantagenet London what Dickens did for Christmas. Here are the gay crowds, the multi-coloured Maypole, the singing and the dancing—above all, the eager, surging vitality of the Springtide—

> When birds do sing—
> Hey ding a ding ding,
> Sweet lovers love the Spring.

The brightly coloured Maypole was adorned with foliage and flowers; forty yoke of oxen drag this mighty pole along, each ox decorated with a nosegay of flowers. Everyone in the happy, jostling crowd carries a green bough, and the procession is formed towards the place where the Maypole is to be set up. The streets are gay with green, the weather-stained

church porches glow with patches of sudden colour where roses have been fastened; and when the May-pole at last is flung aloft, bowers and arbours are formed around, and the Lord and Lady of the May chosen. Then the fun begins to be more uproarious: there is singing, dancing, and feasting; and when night threatens to cover the merriment with her dusky canopy, the bonfires are lit, and the Lady of the May and her girl attendants withdraw.

These celebrations continued into Tudor times. But on one occasion, owing to a "great heartburning and malicious grudge" of the Londoners against strangers, there were riots, and some of the disturbers were executed. This was called "Evil May Day," and led to the temporary suppression of the popular May sports.

No ill-ventilated, gas-lit halls were there for the poor folk to dance in, but the streets and open spaces of the City.

There were courtly dances for the aristocrats in elaborate ball-rooms, and with an orchestra to lead them; merry 'kissing' dances for simpler folk—such as may still be seen in country parts.

And for May Day carol, what could be better than the old folk-song which ushered in the Coming of the Green :—

Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu;
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springeth the wode nu:
Sing cuccu!

As for other festivals, Santa Claus did not impart that mystery to Christmas Eve which we associate with the occasion to-day. But girls went through an absurd ritual at this time in order to discover possible future husbands. The names of favoured men were written

on onions and laid by the fire—whichever part first burst with the heat, or sprouted—that part bore *the* husband's name. Nor was this all. The husband had been found: it remained to be seen what manner of man he was. And so they go to a woodstack and pull out a stick. If knotty, the inference is unpleasing; if straight, he will be a 'kind and gentle' man.

The same rite was pursued also on St. Agnes' Eve.

The superstitious side of the age may be more grotesquely illustrated from the attitude towards disease.

For every ill there was a saint. The Calendar of Saints served as the Materia Medica of the mediæval Londoner. The old woman who sold herbs was presumed to know all about these therapeutic worthies. St. Wolfgang looked after gout (one wonders whether Dr. Haig ever devoted any attention to that gentleman); St. Valentine prevented falling sickness; St. Lawrence took care of the back and shoulders.

In Chaucer's 'Doctor of Physic,' we have an excellent picture of the mediæval medicine man, with his herbal remedies and his knowledge of astronomy—or what we should call astrology. In common with the physicians of the day, he was a priest, but Chaucer indicates that his medical studies had drawn him away from his profession: 'His studie was but litel on the Bible.' Chaucer gives a sly dig at him for his fee-loving propensities:—

> For gold in phisick is a cordial,
> Therefore he lov'ede gold in special.

The supposed medicinal value of the metal, so common not only in the Middle Ages but a century or so later, is here touched upon.

Such was the London in which Chaucer was brought

up. First, as a youthful page, he learned something of the wonderful happenings at Court. Then, for a time, we find him taking part in a military expedition to France, though the experience could not have been an agreeable one, for he was taken prisoner, and had he not been page to King Edward's daughter-in-law there would have been no ransom forthcoming, and probably no *Canterbury Tales*. As it was the King ransomed him for a small sum, and gave him the position of *valet de chambre* on his return to England. Afterwards, as a Squire, he had his little Romance, read love poetry, wrote love poetry, and breathed the atmosphere of Froissart. Chaucer left London in 1370 to serve Edward III. on the Continent; this time he goes not as fighter but as diplomatist, and of the places which he visited—Flanders, France, and Italy—it is Italy that left the deepest impression upon his mind.

It was Italy of the Early Renascence—the Italy of Petrarch, of Boccaccio, of Giotto. The sudden transition from Italy to the office of the Comptroller of Customs in London must have been not wholly pleasing. But Chaucer took life as it came, with cheery good humour and imperturbability. It was no light work, but he remained at it for twelve years, lodging this while in the Aldgate Tower.

Then when the day's work was done, we have no doubt he threw off his government cares, as Lamb did, and gave rein to his imagination.

Just as French chivalry had inspired his earliest work, *The Romaunt of the Rose*, so did Italy colour all his writings of this period. Not yet has he found himself, and realized that his great inspiration is to come from Merrie England.

On the death of Edward, Chaucer fell upon a time

of neglect. But soon fortune smiled upon him anew, and the young Richard appointed him, in 1339, Clerk of the Royal Works.

This was the year that saw the beginning of *The Canterbury Tales*.

Langland's mordant pictures of contemporary life gave an actuality to poetical literature which removed it far from the old heroic stories with which the name of poet hitherto had been connected. And Chaucer, by his rare humour and dramatic power, not only revived the sapling of English poetry, but sowed the seed of the English Novel. He realized what those who followed him for many years to come were too blind to see—that the genius of the English people did not lie in high-flown tales of sentiment, but in homely stories of everyday life, illumined by shrewd observation and tolerant humour, and occasional moralizing. We excel in large massive effects, and lack the mercurial gaiety and delicacy of fancy which alone give distinction and charm to the literature of chivalry. What gave the Arthurian legends, as retold by Malory a century later, such compelling interest was the love interest imported from Normandy. The old British version is merely a story of fighting—a tale of doughty deeds.

Southwark is rich in associations, and the casual reader of to-day, who connects the Borough chiefly with memoirs of *The Pickwick Papers*, will be surprised to find on what historic ground he is walking there. Putting aside the Tabard Inn, visited by many a literary man of our generation, in the ancient High Street, there is the old church of St. Mary Overie, where Chaucer's contemporary, Gower, lies buried; where also rests

the brilliant Stuart writer, Massinger; whilst Beaumont and Fletcher dwelt not far distant.

Southwark was noted for its Inns; "The Tabard Inn" being the most ancient, "so called (says Stow) of the Sign which, as we now term it, is of a jacket or sleeveless coat . . . now these Tabards are only worn by the heralds."

The Canterbury Tales place us in the heart of London.

It is not many years ago since the old Tabard Inn at Southwark could still be visited, and the visitor taste of that London Ale of which Chaucer speaks, and see in imagination the little band of pilgrims.

Beer was found in other places than Inns in the fourteenth century. At the cross roads of frequented highways houses were erected where beer was to be had. And the Pilgrim in the Tale dismounts at a house of this kind, where the Pardoner before starting on his story deemed it desirable

at this Ale-stake
Both drynke and byten cake.

It is to be hoped that the Pilgrims did not light upon a house such as a fourteenth century writer describes: "The servant of a traveller, sent forward to engage the rooms, utters the warm wish that there are no fleas, nor bugs, nor other vermin. 'No Sir, please God,' replies the host, 'for I make bold that you shall be comfortably lodged here, save that there is a good peck of rats and mice!'"

The French of 'Stratforde-atte-Bowe' spoken by the Prioress implied possibly no reflection on the worthy lady:—

> And French she spake ful fair and fetisly
> After the scole of Stratforde-atte-Bowe,
> For French of Parys was to her unknowe.

The Prioress spoke "the usual Anglo-Saxon French of the English Law Courts, and of English Ecclesiastics of the higher rank." Chaucer had been to France and knew the difference between the two dialects, but he had no special reason for thinking more highly of the Parisian than of the Anglo-Saxon French. This Anglo-Saxon French was taught by the Nuns at the Nunnery of St. Leonard, Bow—an ancient Benedictine foundation.[1] It seems, however, that Anglo-Saxon French was giving way even at the Court to the more fashionable Central French.

We can guess from the food consumed at the Tabard hostelry how the middle classes fared; was not the cook accomplished in these matters?—

> To boil the chicken and the marrow bones.
> And poudre marchant tart and galingale:
> He could roast and sethe and boil and fry,
> Maken mortrewes and well bake a pie.

'Poudre marchant tart' seems to have been a kind of mediæval curry powder; 'galingale,' the root of the sweet cyprus, was aromatic and pungent; 'mortrewes' were soups which contained a variety of ingredients—fresh pork, chicken, eggs, saffron, or sometimes fish, bread, pepper, and ale. These ingredients were braised first in a mortar—hence their name. The Londoner approved evidently of strong seasoning.

While on the subject of dinners, it is interesting to note that the 'goliardey' referred to by Chaucer in

[1] See Note by Prof. Skeat to Chaucer.

describing the Miller was a professional diner-out who, in return for his dinner, was supposed to amuse the company by his jests and anecdotes.

There is a disquisition on table manners in the Prologue. Each guest brought his own knife, but for common use there were no forks. At the beginning and end of dinner every one washed his hands—an obviously desirable proceeding. On to the rush-strewn floor the guests flung the bones and scraps of meat. The difficulties presented by gravy were met by the meat—which was served by a carver at a side table—being laid upon thick slices of bread which absorbed the gravy. Every guest had a napkin, and the proper use of the napkin was an elaborate ritual in itself.

This picture of the average merchant has a familiar ring about it :—

> A Marchant was ther with a forked berd,
> In motteleye, and hye on horse he sat;
> Upon his heed a Flaundryssh bevere hat;
> His bootes clasped faire and fetisly;[1]
> His resons he spak ful solempnely,
> Sownynge[2] alway thencrees[3] of his wynnyng.
> . . . . . .
> This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette[4]
> Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette.

The beaver hat still survives in the "topper," and the business instincts of the gentleman express themselves with no radical difference to-day.

Chaucer accepts the current class divisions between 'gentles' and 'churls.' Neither he nor Langland ignore distinctions of rank; and although rich and poor, cultured and rude jostle one another in the procession, yet he is well aware that some of the Tales might displease the 'gentles' among his readers as they

[1] neatly. [2] tending. [3] to the increase. [4] emphasized.

offended the 'gentles' in the Poem. Yet he adds with the tolerance of the artist :—

> . . . I must rehearse
> Their tales all, be they better or worse,
> Or elles falsen some of my matter.

What a fine company of mediæval worthies they are! Soldiers, sailors, merchants, lawyers, men of the Court, men of the fields. The valorous 'gentil Knight' who had fought the heathen; the romantic Squire, amorous and debonaire; the well-fed, richly-clothed Merchant, and the poor, threadbare Scholar; familiar types of London workmen—the carpenter, the weaver, and the cook, and the bluff shopman—

> With many a tempest had his berd been shake.

Then all sorts and conditions of Churchmen, from the fat, pleasure-loving Monk to the hard-working ascetic parish Priest. And for the women: the cultured Prioress whose sympathies were so sensitive that she wept to see a mouse caught; that mediæval Mrs. Gamp —the Wife of Bath; and Nuns, quiet and timid, who must have been scandalized by the coarse gossip of the lady just referred to.

Of the Mendicant Friar, the Poet writes with pleasant humour; but the friar of the fourteenth differs widely from the friar of the thirteenth century.

> And certainly he hadde a murye note;
> Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote:
> . . . . . .
> Somwhat he lisped for his wantownesse,
> To make his Englissh sweet upon his tonge,
> And in his harpynge, when that he hadde songe,
> His eyen twynkled in his heed aryght
> As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.

The position of woman had improved in the

fourteenth century. She was no longer looked upon as the husband's 'Inferior,' and although it was not for another century that her intellectual status was raised, she is looked upon now as man's companion. Household affairs absorbed all of a woman's attention in those times. The "maidens" who assisted her were of good family and regarded as being on an equality with her children. They spun, wove, and carded, embroidered and fashioned garments, and helped to educate the children. For amusements in the house there were chess, draughts, dancing, and music, varied in the summer by games of ball and the weaving of garlands.

The Garden was a great resort for the well-to-do citizen; especially for the ladies. The streets of mediæval London were too rough and dangerous for unattended ladies. The function where the lady of the time shone the most was the Tournament.

It is quite clear, however, from the Paston letters, that the whole duty of woman was to marry, and all the mothers' efforts were directed to that consummation. The girl herself was rarely consulted.

Gower, of whom mention has been made, was possibly a merchant; at any rate Dr. G. C. Macaulay is of that opinion, and there is much in Gower's writings to bear out his view. Richard the Second took a fancy to him, and under the stimulus of the royal approval Gower wrote the *Confessio Amantis*, which contains references to the pleasure which the poet felt in carrying out the Royal behest.

> In Temse whan it was flowende
> As I bi bote cam rowende
> So as Fortune her tyme sette
> My liege Lord par chaunce I mette.
>
> . . . . . .

He bad me come in to his barge,
And whan I was with him at large,
Amonges other thinges seid
He hath this charge upon me leid
And bad me dow my besynesse,
That to his hite worthinesse
Some newe thynge I scholde boke
That he himselfe might loke
After the forme of my wrotynge.

To the poet John Lydgate (1370-1451), a monk at Bury, we are indebted for a picture of London Life, as well known as Chaucer's. In his *London Lackpenny* (or *Licpeny*) he tells the story of an impecunious countryman who comes to London in search of Justice, but cannot find it for lack of money. Nor can he avail himself of any of the delights of the Town without paying his pennies. The record of his fruitless quests provides an interesting picture of the Town for which we are grateful; and can only regret (though without surprise) the decision of the countryman to return to Kent, where presumably the joys of life make less demands upon the purse.

In Westminster Hall I found out one
Which went in a long gown of raye;
I crouched and kneeled before him anon,
For Mary's love, of help I him pray.
"I wot not what thou meanest," 'gan he say;
To get me hence he did me bede;
For lack of money I could not speed.

Within this Hall, neither rich nor yet poor
Would do for me aught, although I should die;
Which seeing, I got me out of the door,
Where Flemynges began on me for to cry,
"Master, what will you coppen or buy?
Fyne felt hats, or spectacles to read?
Lay down your silver, and here you may speed."

. . . . . .

When to Westminster-gate I presently went;
When the sun was at hyghe prime;
Cooks to me they took good intent
And proffered me bread, with ale and wine,
Rib of befe both fat and ful fine;
A fair cloth they began for to spread;
But wanting money, I might not there speed.

London Lackpenny is suggestive also in the light it throws upon the Street cries of the period—always an interesting feature of Town Life.

In East Cheap he hears how—

One cries ribs of beef and many a pie.

In Can-wyke (Cannon Street)—

Then comes one crying hot shepes' feet.

For those with a taste for other diet there was the cry of "Hot Peascod." Strawberries and cherries had their vocal vendors. Of course, in a carpetless age, there would be the cry of "rushes green"; and the shopmen drew attention to their wares with the noisy persistence of booth-owners in a fair.

In another poem Lydgate makes fun of the "Forked Head-dress of the Ladies."

If he did not care about London, he knew his London very well, and was obviously anxious to secure recognition from the rich nobles, to whom the literary aspirant of those times always looked.

He was a kind of Court Laureate for some years, being requested by the City Corporation to celebrate civic ceremonies in verse. A result of this was a "Ballade to the Sheriffs and Aldermen of London on a May Day at a Dinner at Bishop's Wood." Neither the familiar time nor place for civic feasting!

A more notable effort was the poem in which he celebrated Henry the Fifth's return to London after Agincourt. In the reign of Henry the Sixth he was Court Poet, and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, proved a good friend to him. Certainly, he did better than his contemporary, Hoccleve, and was probably in very good circumstances, owing to his influential connection, when he retired to spend the last few years of his life at Bury.

Hoccleve

Thomas Hoccleve (1370?-1450?), the friend of Chaucer, and the valued patron of the Thames Watermen, is another Londoner who has pictured to some extent the life of his day, though there is nothing so vital and concrete in his book as in Lydgate's *Lackpenny*. Hoccleve was a clerk in the Privy Seal Office for twenty-four years, and gives no flattering account of himself in his writings. We gather that he was a frequenter of taverns and took ale, and drank more than he should have done. He was perpetually in money difficulties, and mournfully prophesies that he will have "to trotte into Newgate" unless his salary is paid. Hoccleve lived at "Chestres Inne right fast by the Strande." He was with Chaucer in his last days. A lively companion he cannot have been. But there must have been some lovable qualities in him to have made possible the friendship between him and Chaucer.

The Mendicant Friars

From the outward and visible point of view the Church was never more predominant than in the fourteenth century. There was no street without its Chapel

and its Monastery, which spoke to the citizen of his spiritual needs, both in the present and in the future. No need to remind him of a Heaven and a Hell, and of a Purgatory, which he could shorten as he would. The minute regulation of everyday life which had marked the authority of the Church from the first was as much to the fore as ever. And yet, rich and powerful as she was—for scarcely any Art or learning existed apart from her—there were unmistakeable signs of her waning influence.

As a great moral force she was at her highest in the twelfth century and in the earlier years of the thirteenth. In the Age of Langland and Chaucer she was growing corrupt, and the tree, whose leaves had been "for the healing of the nations," was trailing poisonous foliage. Yet it is only fair to note how great a work had been accomplished. If any one doubts, let him conjure up the scene in "Stinking Lane" in the early part of the thirteenth century, when the first mendicant Friars reached London.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there were many wandering preachers who conducted what we should call Evangelistic Missions in the villages. Wycliffe's Poor Lollard clergy were among them; so also were certain remarkable men like Richard Rolle of Hampole—half hermit, half wandering preacher, a man of singular power. But most noteworthy among the wandering preachers were the Mendicant Friars. Chief among these were the Dominicans (Black Friars) and the Franciscans (Grey Friars).

Nine of the Franciscan brethren had landed at Dover in 1224, five being priests and four laymen. After a brief stay in Canterbury the missionary band settled itself in London. The monks and parish priests

had no very hearty welcome for the newcomers. Was not enough being done already? Why should these meddlers not remain in their own lands?

The grey-frocked brothers did not stay to argue the questions. On the borders of Smithfield, at their door, was a district where the veriest optimist could find work and enough. The shambles of the Town were here—haunts of crime and vice.

For the Preachers did not shirk their self-imposed task. Their humility, their poverty, above all their warm-hearted humanity, made for instant popularity. And in their triumph lay their downfall!

Scorning material wealth, they had riches thrust upon them by grateful admirers. Indeed, their decline in the fourteenth century was due almost entirely to the penalties attaching to great popularity. Gradually their wealth and power increased, and a great monastic house and church were put up (1306) on the site of Christ's Hospital, Newgate Street. The long, bare aisles of Santa Croce at Florence, and the Frari at Venice, will best recall the appearance of the vast church. It was three hundred feet in length, eighty-nine feet wide, and sixty-four feet high. The names of wealthy donors, merchants, etc., were inscribed on the windows, to the great disgust of Langland, who quotes indignantly, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth!"

It was essentially a preaching house, the church of a preaching community, intended for the many rather than for the few. As was the case in Florence and Venice, monuments to the dead covered the long, blank walls. English Queens and the ladies of the Court, knights, mayors, and merchant princes chose to be buried there. None of the tombs now remain to

witness to the craftsmanship of the pre-Reformation sculptor in England. At the Dissolution "the marble and alabaster work was sold for fifty pounds."

Some years before the coming of the Franciscans, their Dominican rivals—the Black Friars—had established themselves in London. The first foundation had been in Oxford, but in 1221 the band of thirteen missionaries came to the Capital.

The Order had received a warm welcome from Stephen Langton, then Archbishop of Canterbury, and a few years later accumulated sufficient funds to build a House close to the high-road running through Holborn, upon the site now known as Lincoln's Inn. In 1276 the generosity of a friendly noble enabled the Black Friars to rebuild their church and monastic house on the eastern banks of the Fleet River, close to the spot where the stream ran into the Thames.

Even in Saxon times the City had extended beyond the western wall which ran from Lud Gate to the bank of the Thames. In the reign of Henry I. houses and churches had arisen on the opposite bank of the Fleet, and dotted the country well on the way to Thorney Island and the great isolated block of buildings which made up the Abbey of Westminster.

Where St. Paul's Station now stands was the Castle of Montfitchet. In the latter half of the thirteenth century its owners were among the most generous supporters of the Dominicans, and, finally, Hugh de Burgh granted the Black Friars his estate on the banks of the Fleet.

In 1276 the brothers moved from Lincoln's Inn. Edward I. even ordered that part of the city wall should be pulled down in order that the convent might

be included within the fortified boundary. With the battlements and towers of London Wall flanking two sides of the monastery grounds, the House of the Black Friars arose, like a grim fortress of the spirit world.

A Priory Church, dormitories, a Refectory, and a Chapter House were put up in quick succession, the cloisters being occupied to-day by the Court of Apothecaries Hall. Such was the reputation of the Dominicans for learning, that their strong rooms were used for the storage of national records and charters. At times Parliament met in the Great Hall.

But perhaps the incident which most clearly illustrates the wealth and power of the great Dominican Priory occurred in the last years of its existence.

On the opposite bank of the Fleet was the Palace of Bridewell, which took its name from a well dedicated to St. Bridget. The first palace arose in Saxon times on the site of a Roman fort. Then came a palace of Henry I. This was rebuilt by Cardinal Wolsey, and redecorated in 1522 by Henry VIII. for the reception of Charles V. of Austria and Spain. The Emperor, however, decided otherwise. Leaving his retinue in the sumptuous apartments prepared in the Palace of Bridewell, he took up his own abode with the Dominicans on the other side of the stream.

Such was the great Dominican House of the Black Friars.

Beyond Bridewell Palace stood the monastery of the White Friars (the Carmelites), and farther on still the church and home of the Templars or Red Cross Knights.

Were it for the beautiful Round Church alone, built as it is to the form of the Temple of the Holy

Sepulchre at Jerusalem, the Order of the Knights Templars would have a claim upon the special affection of every lover of Old London.

The earliest establishment of the Templars in England was on the site of the present Southampton Buildings, on the eastern side of Chancery Lane. The foundations of the old Temple were excavated about two hundred years ago. They were of Caen stone and circular in form.

During the reign of Henry II. the Order secured a piece of ground bounded on the east by the Monastery of the Carmelites, on the south by the Thames, and on the west by what was afterwards known as Essex House. Here the New Temple was put up. The Round Church was consecrated in 1185 by Heraclius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who was in England at the time upon a mission which aimed at persuading King Henry II. to accept the throne of Jerusalem.

The Choir or oblong Church was added in 1240, and was consecrated on Ascension Day in the presence of King Henry III.

No description can give an adequate idea of the rich beauty of the church. Stand for a moment under the arch of the west door and gaze up the vista of clustered columns; how different from the

> Massive arches broad and round,
> That rose alternate row on row
> On ponderous columns, short and low—

of such a church as that of St. Bartholomew. The columns in the Temple Church are of Purbeck marble, and culminate in richly moulded capitals, from which springs the beautiful groined vaulting. To rightly appreciate their beauty, it must be remembered that pews had no part in the original architectural scheme.

The new Temple was the chapel of a band of aristocrats—apart from the people, apart from the Church, one might almost add apart from the King. Unlike those of the Friars, their church was never the centre of a great missionary enterprise. It witnessed to the pride and wealth of an exclusive caste. Small wonder that they were so hated. When trouble arose no hand was raised to help them. Edward II. made a half-hearted attempt to counter the decision of Pope Clement V., but a few days later he yielded to the persuasion of the messengers who had brought the Pope's command. On December 20, 1307, the King's writ was issued to the sheriffs of London, to seize the Knights Templars and all their possessions. On January 8, 1308, the Templars of England, Scotland, and Ireland were arrested. Some were tortured, others were placed in dungeons. In 1312 the Order was finally suppressed by the Council of Vienna, the Pope ordering that the entire belongings of the Templars in England should be given to the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.[1] To-day the recumbent statues which lie within the Round Church (*tibiis in crucem transversis*) alone remain to recall the white-cloaked figures with the red cross on the left shoulder, who worshipped in the new Temple. They had once numbered many brave and noble souls among their members. At the time of their suppression their name had become a by-word for vice and infamy.

But, perhaps, the wing of the Catholic army, which came into most constant contact with the people of Plantagenet London, still remains to be mentioned. More than the haughty Knights Templars, more than the learned Dominicans, more than the country-loving

[1] The Knights Hospitallers.

Cistercians, more than the austere Carthusians, in some ways more even than the kindly Franciscans, did the Hermits and Anchorites impress the popular imagination. "An anker in a cell" is a reference which occurs continually in the deeds and chronicles of the time. Mention is made of one who lived—if the term be permitted—by St. Clement's Well in the Strand. After the murder of Becket, the station became of importance owing to the crowds of pilgrims who made it a stopping-place on their way to Canterbury. Then again, there was an Ankress of Bishopsgate, who received forty shillings a year from the Sheriffs of London. Probably there were few religious houses which could not boast of an anchorite who dwelt in a cell built against the chancel wall of the church, whence the daily elevation of the Host could be seen and the groans of the entombed sufferer could reach the congregation.

Distinct from the anchorite—a recluse who never quitted his cell—was the hermit. A hermitage was always close to the busy haunts of men. The City gate, the Bridge end, the roadside—these were the spots which the hermit preferred. Needless to say, society took care that it received its due for any alms which it bestowed. The hermits were the gatekeepers of the Middle Ages. Many of the pavidge grants, or licences to collect tolls for the repair of roads, are directed "To our well-beloved M or N, the hermit." We are told of one who caused gravel to be dug from the top of Highgate Hill and made a causeway from Highgate to Islington.

There were many happy-go-lucky vagabonds to whom the hermit's life appealed—they found it a convenient guise for begging. Langland abused these

false hermits warmly, and thought the way in which they hoodwinked people was scandalous, and he rated the Bishops for not looking after them better.

These are a few isolated instances of the many-sided activities of the Catholic Church in mediæval London. To her dominance, Chaucer himself indirectly testifies —of the thirty odd pilgrims, twelve belonged to the Church.

Despite the many noble monuments of her power and influence, the authority of the Church was on the decline. One can trace it in the Suppression of the Templars in 1312; in the Canterbury Riot against clerical privilege in 1327; in the Petition of the Commons of 1344 against clerical legislation for laymen; above all in the growing dissatisfaction with the once popular friars, and in the muttered discontent against the wealth and arrogance of many Churchmen.

Lollardy was, of course, an attempt on the part of the Church to purge herself, but the reproofs of Wycliffe fell upon ears as unheeding as did the diatribes of Colet in another century. The real importance of Lollardy lies in the fact that it gave substance to the grievance of the laity against the Church. It sounded the knell of unthinking subordination to the priest, and is one of the many contributing influences that brought about the downfall of the monasteries.

The English Reformation was not an isolated movement, but the culmination of a series of movements—Wycliffe's revolt being among the earliest. Perhaps the first surge of the tide came with the Suppression of the Knights Templars,—the seventh and devastating wave broke over London in the age of More and Wolsey.

The ascetic ideal, which had attracted so many good earnest souls during the Middle Ages, broke down.

It imposed too terrible a strain upon human nature; and human nature revenged itself, as it always does when trampled upon.

The grossness of the fourteenth century replaced the austerity of the thirteenth, and there is little need for surprise. And yet, while it would be idle to deny the moral deterioration of the Church, the deterioration was proceeding with more deadly speed on the Continent than in England. We would gladly think that Chaucer's Poor Town Parson was no solitary exception—

> His noble ensample even to his sheep he yaf:
> That first he wrought and after that he taughte.

CHAPTER V

THE LONDON OF WHITTINGTON AND CROSBY

Here must I tell the praise
Of worthy Whittington,
Known to be in his days
Thrice Lord Mayor of London.

XVIth Century Song

How London doth pour out her citizens!
The mayor and all his brethren in best sort,
Like to the senators of th' antique Rome,
With the plebeians swarming at their heels.

Henry V.

Sir Richard Whittington, ambitious apprentice, zealous merchant, rich and famous Mayor, may well serve as a symbol for industrial London in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

In the pages of Langland and Chaucer we have seen mirrored the social characteristics of mediæval London: have seen somewhat of the soul of the City. In the doings and associations of Whittington and Crosby—typical successful merchants—we shall see rather the material side of London.

Richard Whittington was born in Gloucestershire about 1358, and died in 1423. The period of his career coincides therefore with an important phase in the history of the City, for it covers the political unrest at the time of the Insurrection of 1381, the consequent differences between Richard and the City, and

the growing affluence and influence of London under Henry IV. and Henry V. If not the most remarkable, he was the most successful and apparently the most popular of the mediæval City Magnates: and owing to the breaking out of the Wars of the Roses, he remains for us one of the last of the influential City men.

Before dealing with his personality and times, it may be well to turn to a few of his notable predecessors, and see how vigorous a part the Mayor had been playing in the life of the City.

Thomas Fitz-Thomas (1262) will always be remembered for the determined opposition he offered royalty. First elected in the later years of Henry III., he made it his policy to rely, not upon the aristocratic element in the City, but upon the poorer citizens. The Governing Body, the Aldermen of the Wards, came from the big landowners in the City. These were necessarily few in number, and while they controlled the destinies of the City, the poorer craftsmen were quite unrepresented. His idea of civic government was government 'broad based upon the people's will.' In fact he was doing for the City what Simon de Montford was doing for the Nation.

This policy he pursued consistently. He was the friend of the poor, and certainly gave new life to the struggling craft gilds. His advice to them to organize, and so hold their own against the wealthy and oppressive merchant gilds, is much the same advice as Francis Place gave to the London craftsmen in the early years of the nineteenth century when working for the repeal of the Combination Laws.

Henry resented strongly this policy, and on one occasion, after Fitz-Thomas had been chosen Mayor, refused to recognize him. Finally, however, he was

compelled to do so, and when in 1264 the King was given another lease of royal life, a curious scene took place in St. Paul's, where Mayor and Aldermen had assembled to renew their oaths of fidelity. It reads like a foreshadowing of the great Puritan struggle some centuries later.

"My Lord," said Fitz-Thomas, "So long as unto us you will be a good lord and king, so long we will be faithful and duteous unto you."

But the next turn of the wheel of fortune saw the King in the ascendant. By a trick, Fitz-Thomas was seized, and was hurried into the grim obscurity of Windsor Keep, whence he never returned. For six years the City was at the mercy of the King, and no Mayor is elected.

Then after a while the King, now growing old and feeble, lost grip of things, and the Mayoralty was resumed. The new favourite of the people was Walter Hervey (1274), who had no wish for the somewhat perilous honour, but accepted it when thrust upon him. The aristocratic party objected, and appeal was made to the King. In the midst of the wrangle Henry died, and after a short delay the people won, and Hervey was declared elected.

What did Industrial London look like in the fourteenth century—in the Age of Whittington?

It was a London apportioned, much the same as now, into Wards: a London inhabited for the most part by its craftsmen and tradesmen. True, there were splendid houses and impressive monasteries belonging to nobles and ecclesiastics. But the nobles took a slight share only in the life of the City; and the Church, though it brooded over the lives of all men and women,

did not concern itself with the actual round of every-day pursuits. The City was ruled by its business men. If we inquire into the ritual of this business life, we shall see how these men, poor and wealthy alike, combined with their fellows in gilds, how from these gilds sprang the great City Companies.

The early gilds[1] were friendly societies, which met monthly, over good Saxon beer, and ordered Masses for the souls of any of their brethren who had died since the last meeting.

The mercantile gild does not come into prominence until after the Conquest, when the merchants began to be powerful.

A writer in Henry II.'s reign uses a phrase—'commune, in other words a gyld,' which shows how identified the gild was with the town corporation.

There was another kind of gild, the craft gild, which represented the democratic gild as distinct from the aristocratic merchant gild. And many were the civic struggles between the merchants' and the craftsmen's gilds.

The most famous, and probably earliest merchant gild was that of the Steelyard Merchants. From this gild sprang the Hanseatic League, a commercial confederacy on the east shores of the Baltic to protect their trade from the piratical Normans. Hence they took the name of Easterlings. This Easterling Gild was established before 967, for Ethelred makes minute regulations protecting them on certain conditions. At Christmas and Easter they had to pay toll—"Two grey clokes and one brown one, with ten pounds of pepper, five pairs of gloves, and two vessels of vinegar."

Their factory was in Thames Street, and it was

[1] Gild, guild, geld=a payment; from Saxon gildan, to pay.

about Richard the Second's time that they acquired the name of Steelyard from a house which they took. This building was stoutly constructed in view of riots, and the residents lived in a monastic manner. Celibacy was enjoined, and none were allowed to sleep out. The officers took this oath :—"We promise and swear to keep and maintain the rights and privileges of the merchants in England and all laws and ordinances to the best of our abilities, and to deal justly towards every one, be he rich or poor, in all affairs of commerce without malice—So help us God and all His Saints."

When the gilds began to multiply, as they did in the twelfth century, as soon as London had vindicated her right to municipal self-control, and when the Mayor had succeeded the Portreeve and Vice-Comes, then we hear much of squabbles between the various fraternities ; the craftsmen belonging to the Goldsmiths fell out with the Tailors, and the streets were infested by contentious crowds who sided with one or the other, in a way reminiscent of the Montague and Capulet factions in Verona. But, while the gilds were squabbling among themselves, the City itself had by no means secured immunity from Royal interference. The 'old liberties and free customs' had been recognized in Magna Carta ; but Henry III. subsequently made it apparent that the King's favour would have to be paid for pretty heavily. The gilds were growing wealthy, and the King was not inclined to ignore so profitable a source of income. He was a capricious and tyrannous individual ; once he ordered all the shops to be shut and the citizens to go to Westminster Fair in winter time, and many were the passages of arms with the Mayors, in which those dignitaries got the worst of it.

Edward, who followed, was of another type. He was severe and overbearing, but he was not violent or capricious, and although the 'liberties' were not respected, yet he governed well, and the City looked up again in affluence. His son, who imitated the arbitrariness of his father with little of his ability, soon found himself worsted and dethroned.

The City had triumphed.. And from the accession of Edward the Third there were no more attempts to deny or betray its 'liberties and free customs.'

The Charter which he gave the City was the most generous charter as yet accorded. What is, perhaps, more to the point, he held by it, and up to that disastrous bubonic pestilence named "The Black Death," the City enjoyed a time of great prosperity.

By the time of the third Edward, the word 'gild' gave place to 'craft' or 'mystery'; and we hear no more of Aldermen of a Gild, but of Masters and Wardens.

Gradually the craft-gilds became powerful enough to control the election of the City Officers. It was the work of Walter Hervey to organize the different trades separately, and to give to the craftsmen Charters of incorporation. In this way the oligarchic aims of the aldermen were defeated. Thus did the craft-gild become a Company, and a new civic force sprang into being.

Among the Companies, there were some—about twelve in number—that stood above their fellows in industrial importance. The Lord Mayor was elected from one of the twelve Great Companies. Among the most important of these were the Mercers, Drapers, and Fishmongers.

Whittington was certainly a Mercer. The Mercer

traded in "merceries"—woollen cloths, ribbons, laces, —and it is possible that the Sir John Fitz-Warren, whose daughter Alice he married, was his first master, and also a Mercer. There is a tradition to that effect which Besant assumed as historically trustworthy, in his delightful little study of Whittington.

Other authorities, however, have disputed the authenticity of this pleasant story, and it is certain that Whittington's early life in London is almost as obscure as the first few years of Shakespeare's sojourn. We find him supplying the household of the Earl of Derby, afterwards Henry IV., with velvets and damasks,[1] and in 1379 he contributes five marks for the defence of the City. Meanwhile, of course, he had served his apprenticeship to Fitz-Warren or another, and taken the customary Vows of Industry, Obedience, and Duty. Coming as he did fresh from the West, it would not be surprising if the eager, ambitious boy had read into the stirring clash of Bow Bells some message of the future.

There is assuredly no basis for the nursery version of the poor lad who came up to seek his fortune, for Whittington came of well-to-do parents, and when sent up in his teens to London, would probably carry with him letters of introduction. But to an ambitious apprentice the dream of becoming Lord Mayor would be no uncommon one.[2]

But as yet we must leave him dreaming, and inquire into the character of an apprentice existence, and try and see through young Whittington's eyes the Life of the City.

[1] *Dictionary of National Biography.*

[2] The most attractive setting of the facts and legends around Whittington may be found in *Sir Richard Whittington*, by Besant and Rice.

The period of Apprenticeship was usually seven years, and the Gild authorities had to be satisfied as to moral character and efficiency both before admittance and during the novitiate. Admission itself was an imposing ceremony, by which the youth became a member of the family of his master, and the master was expected not only to teach him but to look after his morals. Hours were long—but, on the whole, there was plenty of liberty. For there were many holidays in those times. The sports described by Fitz-Stephen had still their vogue, while of the May Day revels, with their plenitude of blossoms, Morris dances, and singing; of the quaint rituals on St. Agnes' Eve and Christmas Eve; of the gay Pageants; of the stirring tourneys; of the boisterous sports that found favour all the year round with mediæval Londoners; of the skating and sliding at Moorfields in winter time; of Martinmas with its feastings; of Christmas with its mummings;—of all these things mention has been made.[1] And this was the life which would appeal to the young Whittington. He would see many a gay Pageant, and would hear tell of the notable occasion when the Mayor, Henry Picard (1363), entertained four royal personages.[2]

But strong and prosperous as the City was, it still depended largely upon Royal favour. London was not yet a market for the world, and the citizen viewed with jealousy and fear the encroachments of foreign merchants.

[1] The great City holidays were Christmas Day, Twelfth Day, Easter Day, St. John the Baptist (June 24), St. Peter and St. Paul (June 29); add to these the Saints' Days of every City Company, and special rejoicings.

[2] Edward III., King David of Scotland, the King of Cyprus, King John of France. The Mayor gave many lavish presents, and was diplomatic enough to return to the King of Cyprus money won from him at play.

In 1376, the City obtained a charter preventing foreigners from selling by retail. But foreign influences being strong at Court, it was thought advisable to conciliate Prince Richard by feasting and entertaining him. 'Feed the Brute' is evidently a maxim not only useful in domestic strategy, but of great service in political tactics.

Richard, though generous in his promises, was not mindful of the City's liberties; and his neglect paved the way for his undoing. How closely the commercial and political life of London are interwoven is illustrated by the services of John Philpot, the Mayor, in 1378.

The Seas had been harassed by a Scottish pirate named Mercer. Philpot equips a fleet at his own expense, and routs utterly the pirate and his followers. Later on the Royal Treasury needs money, and the Royal Navy needs ships. Money and ships are supplied by this patriotic citizen.

The political tinge given to the Rising in Kent by the outcry against the Poll Tax, must not obscure the fact that the Rising was at bottom of a social and religious character. The great agitator of the movement, John Ball, was a priest; and there is no doubt that the poor priests of Wicliffe were also largely instrumental in fanning the blaze. Wicliffe himself was no favourer of revolution; but his followers could not and would not follow his fine distinctions.

The early successes of the insurgents testify to the sympathy felt with the cause they represented; even although the bold use of Richard's name helped them in certain directions.

Large in numbers, they lacked provisions, and an immediate advance on London was necessary. If they succeeded there anything might happen?

In the City they had sympathisers, not only among the poorer people, but among the aldermen.

Marshalsea Prison was destroyed, and the Palace of Lambeth ruthlessly attacked. It was an unpleasant position for the peaceful inhabitants of Southwark.

Finally, the bridge was opened to the Rebels, the Mayor, Walworth, stipulating that no harm should be done to the City. Then for three days the mob held possession.

From Aldgate came the Essex Rebels; over London Bridge the Kentish men; and detachments continued to pour in. The Authorities were cowed, offering no resistance; and many of the craftsmen, we may be sure, openly abetted them. Then all the fierce animalism of a huge undisciplined army broke forth.

The magnificent Palace of the Savoy was sacked, and its rich treasures destroyed; the fine manor house of Robert Hales, Treasurer of England, shared the same fate. The Fleet and Westminster prisons were broken open, and the Inns of Court obliterated—bitterly were the lawyers hated. But the lust for blood was only whetted by all this destruction; a red madness seized the rebels, and a panic-terror came upon the City.

The Tower served as the one great Refuge, and round this the mob surged and thundered. It was deemed necessary by the King to surrender those ministers who were the special subjects of execration, and so the mob were given access to the Tower, from which the King had withdrawn.

Why this cowardly concession should have been granted is not at all clear. But the King and his advisers probably considered it a case of throwing a sop to wolves in order to gain time while these wild creatures were growling over the food.

Hales and Archbishop Sudbury were dragged forth and killed, and much bloody work was accomplished by the ruffians who swarmed over the Tower, while the soldiers looked on without interfering.

Sudbury was slaughtered because he had introduced the hated Poll Tax, and had imprisoned John Ball. It was a wanton murder, for he was one of the finer ecclesiastics of the day; but character weighed little with the frantic mob. Indeed, there is much to be said for Mr. G. M. Trevelyan's verdict:—"Everything we know of Sudbury's life is to his credit as a kind and good man. . . . He won less respect from the Church than his manner of life and death deserved, for he had shown himself cool in defending ecclesiastical privilege, and had neglected to and refused to persecute heretics."

However, it must be remembered, he was not a strong man, and had something of the fatal pliability and vacillation of Cranmer, but he was in intention, and, when safe opportunity presented itself, in practice, a force on the side of Ecclesiastical Reform.

But we must not blame the leaders of the revolt for all the enormities committed by their followers, and it is quite evident from their pathetic trust in the young King at Smithfield that the rebels were genuinely loyal, and only desirous of fairer treatment.

Richard was cool and plucky, and resolved to meet them at Smithfield and listen to their demands. The crowd was quiet, but with that sullen quietude that might at any moment break into fierce hostility. The rebel leaders, elated with success, were cool and peremptory in their commands. Then came the episode of the killing of Tyler. The hot-tempered Mayor, enraged at the insolence of his attitude towards the

King, slew him, and at once a howl of fury rose from the insurgents. Only the tact and coolness of Richard saved the critical situation. Any hesitation on his part, and it would have fared ill with him and his followers. He was but a stripling, yet he did what many a seasoned veteran would have feared to do. He rode towards the rebels, exclaiming: "I will be your leader!" The young man was not only brave; he had a strong sense of the dramatic. Such an appeal rarely fails in real life, as in the theatre, to be greeted by thunders of applause. It effected its purpose. And meanwhile it enabled the loyal citizens to organize and make effective resistance. London was saved. And the moral is—you may not be able to quell a mob by violent methods, but a little guile will easily deceive them. For if a mob has the natural cruelty of a child it is also as credulous. And the demagogue of every Age knows that.

For a while, however, the King was as good as his word; and it was over a prosperous City that Whittington became Mayor in 1397. His novitiate must have been a useful one.

In 1406, he became Mayor for the second time; in 1419, for the third time. During these years he took part in many a Riding and Civic hospitality, and on that memorable occasion when the news of Agincourt was brought to the Mayor while "processing" on Lord Mayor's Day, Whittington, though not the Mayor on that occasion, was, we may be sure, a very prominent figure in the public rejoicings.

The poet Lydgate celebrates the event:—

> The Mayor of London was redy bown,
> With all the craftes of that Citie;
> All cloked in red throughout the town,
> A seeming sight it was to see.

In his third year of office Whittington declared against the adulteration of wines, and punished a certain William Horold with the pillory for imitating Malmsey wine.

Whittington was held in high esteem by Henry V. And this royal patronage was certainly not due to any undue favouring on Whittington's part of the King's interest as against the interest of his City. The records show that he was a just, humane, and generous Mayor—one of the worthiest of the Mayors, though his lot was cast in pleasanter places than had befallen some of his distinguished predecessors.

One of his last acts testifies somewhat theatrically to the splendour and affluence of the Mayoralty. At a splendid banquet given to Henry and his Queen, in commemoration of Agincourt, the fires were fed with cedar and perfumed wood. And after the Queen had spoken, it is said that Whittington flung into the flames the King's own bonds—to the value of £60,000, or about a million and a quarter of our present money. This meant that he made himself surety for the loans due to the Companies. A significant comment, this, on the wealth of the Mayor, to say nothing of his princely generosity.

Small wonder that the King held this citizen so highly in esteem; and a proof is furnished by his refusal to proceed with the repairing of Westminster Abbey until Whittington should have approved the plans.

Under Edward III. the old Gild became, as we saw, the Livery Company, and an entire reconstruction of its internal constitution followed. Not only did the industrial and commercial life of the City revolve round

these Companies; all matters of civic interest, from the policy of the Commune to the side-shows of the mediæval pageants emanated from these wealthy trading brotherhoods.

In 1385, for instance, we find them dictating who is to be Mayor, and, with the perversity of all oligarchies, persisting in the return of a member of the Grocers' Company in direct opposition to popular feeling:—

"Also this year Brembre chosen Maire agen, bi the said crafts . . . and not bi fre eleccion of the citie of London; as it ousith to be."

The several great companies received their Charter or Privileges, and the King himself became a "brother" of one of the Societies.

In return for these Privileges the King expected, and usually received, various little perquisities in kind, and punishments were inflicted if any member took a parsimonious view of his indebtedness. For instance, "One William Payne, a perverse man, refused to contribute to a barrel of ale to be sent to Henry V. in France. He was fined three and fourpence for a swan (at that time a favourite delicacy) for the Master's breakfast, and refusing to pay was imprisoned, brought before the Mayor afterwards, but it was long before he could be humbled and brought to good behaviour."

The Mayor, no less than the King, expected certain gifts. Some Mayors—Whittington for instance—were not to be bribed into acquiescence with all the doings of the Companies. Others were silenced—notably William Waldene (1422)—by being presented with substantial contributions to the dinner table.

Among the trade regulations was a curious rule of the Beer trade, enjoining retailers "to sell in pots of pewtre sealed and open, and whoever carried ale to the

buyer, should hold the pot in one hand and the cup in the other; and that all who had pots unsealed should be fined."

In the records of the City Companies are many details as to election feasts and ceremonials. In order to discourage members from abstaining from these dinners a fine was inflicted if they failed to be present. We hear about the "noise of the minstrels" and the presentation of "holy plays" by way of entertainment. The dinners themselves were such formidable affairs, that I should imagine the noise of the minstrels necessary to drown the cries of the dyspeptic. Here is an election dinner in outline :—

First Course.—Brawn with mustard . . . swan, roasted capons.

Second Course.—Venison in broth, coney, partridges, and roasted cocks.

Third Course.—Peas in syrup, great birds with little ones together, fritters . . . cold bake meats.

Here is the recipe for a "sweet" entitled "Leche Lombard"—"A kind of jelly made of cream, isinglass, sugar, and almonds, salt, eggs, raisins, dates, pepper, and spices; the whole boiled in a bladder and mixed with pork pounded in a mortar."

Melted fat or lard took the place of butter, for the most part, in the fourteenth century, and sugar was represented by honey.

To add to these festive gatherings, the brothers were enjoined to bring "damsels."

One of the earliest cookery books is a MS. "Forme of Curing compiled by the chef maistre cokes of Kyng Richard the Second," containing one hundred and ninety-six receipts. Among them is a startling one

for boiled porpoise, served with almond paste and furmenty.

As a rule fish receipts predominate, there being many days of meat abstinence. Vegetables were becoming common, though the potato, of course, is as yet unknown; but there are onions, turnips, rice, peas, leeks, cabbages, and mushrooms.

Ale was the common drink; but spiced wines—French and German—enjoyed a vogue.

The rules against adulterating food and bread were very severe, and the City looked well after them.

Pageants.—The Pageants of the Age are inseparably connected with the trading companies. One of the earliest on record was that given on the return of Edward the First from his victory over the Scotch: "Every citizen—according to their several trades—made their several shows, especially the fishmongers."

The Pageant which celebrated any important political event—a Coronation or a Victory—was termed a "Triumph" or a "Riding." Chaucer refers to the interest taken in these gatherings by the shopkeepers:—

> For when ther any ryding was in Chepe,
> Out of the shoppe thider wold he lepe.

The great festivals of the Age were the "May Day Celebrations" and "The Midsummer Watch," which ushered in Midsummer Day. In the sixteenth century they languished; and the Puritans swept away these picturesque pagan survivals.

"The Midsummer Watch," revived for a brief period in Stow's time, has been described by that Tudor chronicler, and served to remind his contemporaries of the glorious pageants once so frequent.

On the vigil of St. John the Baptist . . . every man's door being shadowed with green birch, long fennel, St. John's wort, white lilies, and such like garnished with beautiful garlands of flowers, had also lamps of glass with oil burning in them all the night. Some hung out branches of iron curiously wrought, containing hundreds of lamps alight at once. . . . Then had ye beside the standing watches all in bright harness, in every ward and street of this city a marching watch that passed through the principal streets thereof. . . . The whole way for this watch extended all to 3200 Tailors yards of assize. . . . The marching watch contained in number about 2000 men, part of them being old soldiers of skill . . . drummers and pipers, standard- and ensign-bearers, sword players, trumpeters on horseback, gunners with hand-guns, archers in coats of white fustian signed on the breast and back with the arms of the city, their bows bent in their hand with sheaves of arrows by their side; all the men in bright corselets . . . there were also divers pageants, Morris dancers, constables, . . . and every one in garment of scarlet thereupon and a chain of gold, his henchman following him, his minstrels before him . . . the waits of the city, the mayor, officers of his guard before him, all in a livery of worsted or . . . jackets party-coloured, the Mayor himself well-mounted on horseback, the sword-bearer before him in fair armour well-mounted also. . . . The sheriffs Watches came one after the other in like order, but not so many in number as the Mayor's, *etc.*

From this extract some notion may be gathered as to the elaborate character of the Show. This Mid-summer Watch combined some of the elements of the smaller Pageants.

On the entry of Elizabeth of York in 1486, "all the streets through which she should pass by were cleanly dressed and beseem with cloths of tapestry and arras, and some streets, as Cheap, hung with rich cloth of gold, velvet and silk. Along the streets from the

Tower to St. Paul's stood in order all the crafts of London in their liveries, and in divers parts of the City were ordained well-singing children, some arrayed like angels and some like virgins, to sing sweet songs as her Grace passed by."

The decoration of the streets was on an exceedingly sumptuous scale. Fountains flowed with red and white wine; velvet and silk trappings made the course ablaze with colour. The Cars were often very imposing and elaborate concerns. The Mercers' Company boasted a structure over twenty feet high, called the "Maidens' Chariot." This was covered with silver embossed work, carried twenty characters in costume, and was drawn by nine white Flanders horses, three abreast, in rich trappings of silver and white feathers, each mounted by an allegorical personage, and the whole accompanied by a hundred attendants.

In front of these Processions, serving the twofold purpose of impressing and repressing the mob, were men in weird costumes—"Monstrous and terrible wild men."

These Pageants were to the populace of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries what a popular melodrama is to the people of to-day. London would hold her own with even Bruges or Paris in the splendour of her spectacles.

In the fifteenth century Water Pageants also became popular.

Matthew Paris gives us a spirited account of the reception of Henry III., on his marriage in 1286 :—

The whole city was illuminated with flags and banners, chaplets and hangings, candles and lamps, and with wonderful devices and extraordinary representations, and all the roads were cleaned from mud and dirt. The citizens too went out to

meet the King and Queen, dressed in their adornments and vied with each other trying the speed of their horses.

The nobles proceeded to Westminster "dressed in silk garments with mantles worked in gold, and with costly changes of raiment, mounted on valuable horses, glittering with new bits and saddles, and riding in troops arrayed in order. They carried with them three hundred and sixty gold and silver cups, preceded by the King's trumpeters and with horns sounding."

On the return of Henry V. from Agincourt, the Mayor and Aldermen met him clothed in 'orient grained scarlet,' with many citizens richly attired and the City clergy in all their splendid apparel.

What we call the 'Lord Mayor's Show,' and mediæval London called a 'Riding,' took place with the presentation of the Mayor elect to the King or his representative. It ceased, however, to be a genuine 'Riding' in 1452, when for the Streets was substituted the River. The Thames, of course, was the chief highway of the city, and the Companies vied with one another now in the costliness of their barges.

In Tudor times, when most of the Pageants fell into desuetude—the Theatre having taken their place—the Lord Mayor's Show remained the one great Pageant.

What the 'Riding' or Pageant was to the peaceful citizen the Tournament was to the citizen martially inclined.

In an Age when personal prowess was so valuable an asset in warfare, it is natural that the authorities should have favoured sports which helped to train men in the use of arms; and when to these were added the spectacular possibilities of the tournament, one cannot be surprised at their popularity. They were frequently

held at the Tiltyard at Whitehall, at Smithfield, and in Cheapside; and as for what the Knights achieved on these occasions, of the comedy and tragedy of the tourney, is it not all written in the pages of Froissart?[1]

There is engrained in most men a spirit of adventure, a craving for some emotional stimulus that will break up the routine of ordinary life. Civilization imposes its conventions upon us, and compels us to put our passions under bit and bridle; but the elemental, though repressed, cannot be suppressed. Its expression may vary with the fashions and manners of the Age, but in essence it is with us to-day quite as much as it was in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The Joust and the Tourney have been relegated to the theatrical lumber-room of the past, but the spirit which animated them may be detected—though less picturesquely expressed—in the football field, on the racecourse, and on the Stock Exchange. In the Middle Ages we sought excitement in gambling with our lives; to-day we prefer to gamble with our fortunes. The only difference between the old and new City life is that mental agility takes predominance to-day of physical agility. The modern man often expresses abhorrence for the crude savagery of his mediæval forefathers, for their delight in a "scrap," their joy in childish amusements, and their general insensibility to suffering. Our manners have improved, no doubt; but, taking men and women in the aggregate, it is not very obvious that there is any appreciable moral difference between the world which Langland castigated and the world which felt the lash of Ruskin's irony.

[1] Froissart describes with especial vividness and spirit a great tournament in the reign of Richard II., where sixty Knights took part.

The shops of mediæval London were exposed to the streets, no barrier of glass intervening between seller and buyer. Indeed, right up to the seventeenth century the shops presented much the appearance of an extensive bazaar, members of a particular trade congregating at one spot, which became known as the special mart for that commodity. The very names of the City Streets seem to testify to this—Bread Street, Milk Street, Fish Street Hill, The Poultry, Hosier's Lane, *etc.*

The Clothes Stall, known as a "Frippery" in Shakespeare's time, probably existed at this period. Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when costumes were so gorgeous and numerous, the 'frippery' would abound. There is a print of a 'frippery' (1587), which shows the tailor seated at a table surrounded by his implements of trade. A customer is approaching in feathered cap and long cloak.[1] Many of the clothes are hung on lines. A doubtful-looking dog is regarding the scene with an expression suggesting a Puritan strain in his blood.

At night time the goods displayed by day were put away in a cellar. Signs swung overhead along all the streets. Every mart was at the Sign of —— something or other. These signs were obliged to be at least nine feet above the level of the street, so as to allow a horseman to pass underneath without unpleasant consequences.

Mud and timber houses predominated, but these were giving way in the sixteenth century to dwellings of stone, and occasionally of brick. There were no footpaths at this time; the road curved on either side towards 'kennels,' along which the dirt of the streets was conveyed, or was supposed to be conveyed.

[1] *London*, edited by Charles Knight (1843), vol. v.

One fact cannot be insisted on too frequently. London—as we understand the term—has always been the centre of a larger whole. True, London is a town upon the banks of the Thames. But its unique character is due to its position as an Imperial metropolis. So with its citizens. The men who have made London have taken their part in the creation, not only of civic, but of national, and even of European history. This was as true in Plantagenet and Tudor times as it is to-day.

Throughout the Middle Ages there was a constant flux of traders between London and the Continent. The Conquest was followed by an incursion of Norman traders and artificers. William of Malmesbury particularly notes those who came to London from Caen and Rouen. The next step was the establishment of the great branch offices representing the leading German and Italian trading houses, and the coming of the bankers from Lombardy (who gave the name to Lombard Street) and Cahors. In turn the heavy exports to Flanders and Italy led to a constant passing of London merchants to the Continent.

Let us consider for a moment the effects of this intercourse. What had been happening in Western Europe during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries? In Italy Dante had lived and died. Giotto had painted the great series of frescoes in the Upper Church at Assisi; Angelico those in the monastery of San Marco at Florence. Brunelleschi had designed the dome of the Florentine Duomo. Ghiberti had fashioned the bronze doors of the Baptistery. Donatello had put up the noble equestrian statue to the Condottiere Gattamelata at Padua. Claus Sluter had carved the tombs of the Dukes of Burgundy at Dijon. In Flanders the

Van Dycks and Van der Weyden had established the new art of painting in oil colours.

The travels of their merchants made London familiar with all these efforts. It would be strange indeed if the knowledge had not exercised a tremendous effect upon English Life.

As a fact it did so. During the fifteenth century the rough and ready customs and manners of the Middle Ages were gradually superseded. The comforts which had been almost confined to the Courts and the monastic houses were gradually extended to the burgher classes.

Instances might be readily multiplied. Here is one.

In Norman and early Plantagenet times a good-wife was wont to admonish her servants not to go to bed on a cold night half dressed. Above all, they were not to put out the candle by flinging their shirts at it. She pointed out that the proper course was to strip and then "prudently extinguish the candle before getting into bed, with the mouth or with the hand, but *not* with the shirt."[1] The Benedictine custom of sleeping in night clothes was an obvious proof of the greater civilization of the monks in an age when folk usually went to bed naked. With increasing wealth, however, the use of night attire and a score of similar amenities spread beyond the limits of the monasteries.

More roomy and better-appointed houses were put up during the latter part of the fifteenth century, and the home of a leading London merchant could almost challenge comparison with a royal palace. A signal proof of this will occur to every Londoner. I mean, of course, the house of Sir John Crosby, which stood for so many years in Bishopsgate Street.

Crosby was the son of a gentleman of the King's

[1] Trail's *London*, p. 382.

Chamber at the Court of Henry IV. This courtier had been granted by the King the guardianship of Joan, the heiress of a wealthy fishmonger, and eventually married his ward. John Crosby of Crosby Hall was born of the marriage. He became a silk mercer with a business house in Cony Hope Lane, near the Grocers' Hall, selling silks, satins, Genoa velvets, Florentine and French brocades, much as a leading wholesale draper would do nowadays. But John Crosby's interests extended far beyond the mere buying and selling of soft goods. He had constant dealings with such financial and trading houses as the German Hansa, the Bardi, and the Medici of Florence. He may well have negotiated some of King Edward's loans with the Florentine bankers. In 1466 he was elected a Member of Parliament for the City of London. In 1470 his duties took John Crosby to Calais, where he had been appointed Mayor of the Staple. The Merchant Staplers had the monopoly of exporting the principal raw commodities from England, including wool, to the French lands then held by the English King. As sheriff and mayor, John Crosby exercised jurisdiction in all commercial cases in Calais.

It was in 1471 that the events took place which won for John Crosby his knighthood. Thomas Nevil, the Bastard Falconbridge, had marched on London with 17,000 men to liberate Henry VI. from the Tower. Falconbridge established himself in Southwark, and, after being repulsed at Bankside, stormed London Bridge. Then 3000 men were told off to cross the Thames and assault Aldgate and Bishopsgate. On the 12th of May the citizens under Crosby repulsed the attack. Edward IV. reached London on the 21st, and the City turned out to greet him in the

fields between Hornsey and Shoreditch. Crosby was knighted for his services. A bronze statue of the knight in full armour is still preserved at Grocers' Hall.

In 1472 Sir John was engaged upon an ambassadorial mission in France connected with the safe keeping of Henry, Earl of Richmond (Henry VII.). The King had naturally no wish to see his rival in England. Crosby died in 1475, leaving many charitable bequests and valuable estates at Hanworth and Feltham, in addition to the fine house and grounds in Crosby Place.

Sir John was buried in the tomb which can still be seen in the Priory Church of Great St. Helen's. He lies in full armour, head on helm, with his first wife, Agnes. His will includes a bequest of "400 marks for a priest of good fame to say Mass and pray for my soul for forty years after my decease."

Doubtless the hard-headed man of business considered it unlikely that his memory would last for a longer period.

The chance preservation of part of his house in Bishopsgate Street, however, has made Sir John Crosby a rival of Dick Whittington in the interest and affection of Londoners. Beneath the wonderful oak roof of the Banqueting Hall it was possible, until a year ago, to realize the lodging which a rich London merchant of the fifteenth century judged desirable. It is little to the credit of Crosby's town that so unique a treasure has just been sacrificed to the supposed needs of commerce.

In Sir John Crosby's age, Bishopsgate Street ran from Leadenhall Street to the corner of Camomile Street, where the City Gate formerly stood. A dozen or so houses belonging to the greater City merchants made up the street.

With increasing wealth Crosby found that he wished for a large house, and, in 1466, he applied to Dame Alice Wodehous, Prioress of St. Helen's, for a lease of "all that tenement with houses, upper chambers, cellars, and gardens adjacent, once in the tenure of Cataneo Pinello, a merchant of Genoa, and now in the tenure of the said John." Whether Crosby himself built the Great Hall and the Council Chamber—the rooms known to this generation as Crosby Hall—is not known. But it is certain that they were only part of a great house covering what is now known as Crosby Square, and occupying an area about six times as large as the two halls. It was furnished with four courts, entrance being obtained by the Foregate from Bishopsgate Street.

The beauty of the whole may be judged from the grace and charm of the great Banqueting Hall. This was some sixty-nine feet long, twenty-seven feet wide, and forty feet high. At the south end was a Minstrels' Gallery. On the west a fine oriel window (ten feet high) and six other windows of striking beauty. A great fireplace — ten feet by six feet — stood on the eastern side.

But the most striking feature was the superb oak roof, a four-centred arch, composed of three longitudinal and nine transverse beams, the intersections of which formed twenty-seven small pointed arches and as many pendants. The whole was decorated with a wealth of carved ornament.

Picture the Hall during the occupancy of Sir John Crosby. The big wall spaces below the windows were covered with hangings of tapestry. At right angles with the oriel window, between it and the fireplace, was the table of honour for the Master of the House and

his friends. The Mercer's apprentices and the rest of his household were seated at side tables. On Sundays and Holy Days Lady Crosby joined her husband in the Great Hall, attired in all her finery, with her lace coif towering a yard above her head, and attended by her daughter and her maids. She took her place at Sir John's right hand, and the meal commenced. The meat was of the best. A century earlier the City authorities had taken steps to prevent any frauds by adulteration. "Divers cooks and good men of the City" were sworn to examine all the meat sold within the walls. If they found anything wrong the unhappy culprits suffered. We read of "John Thurkyld, Thomas atte Gate, and Walter Westmynster" being condemned to "stand in the pillory half an hour and to have their meat burnt under them."

The methods of serving and eating were more primitive. Lady Crosby, like the Prioress Eglantyne, relied upon nature's fork—her fingers.

My Lady's bedroom was scantily furnished, but did not lack every comfort associated with twentieth century civilization. Tapestry curtains were hung over the doors to prevent draughts, while a brazier, with lighted charcoal, stood in the middle to combat the frosts of winter. When these did not suffice, there was always a retreat to the great bed, with its down mattress, its Ypres linen sheets and heavy hangings. The last item in the furniture of the bedroom was probably a tiny altar, over which was a crucifix.

Such was Sir John Crosby's home in the days when a merchant-prince was soldier and diplomat as well as tradesman and financier.

For a brief period during his romantic career

Richard, Duke of Gloucester, lived at Crosby Hall. Dealing with the events after the death of Edward IV., in 1483, Fabian, the Chronicler, notes that "the sayd Duke caused the Kynge to be removed to the Towre and he lodgid himselfe in Crosbye's Place in Bysshoppis-gate Street."

Most of Shakespeare's references to Crosby Hall are certainly apocryphal, but there can be no doubt that Richard III. held counsel with his adherents in Crosby Palace.

In 1523, it passed into the possession of Sir Thomas More. *Utopia* was sketched during More's visit to Bruges and Antwerp in 1515. There is therefore no reason for associating Crosby Hall with the inception of More's Ideal Commonwealth. But it has been surmised that More saw the second edition of *Utopia* through the press during his stay at Crosby Place. Certainly the belief will be treasured by all true Londoners. It furnishes the only justification there is for the removal of the old building from the precincts of the City. All that is left of Crosby's home is now being re-erected on the site of More's "country home" in Chelsea. It will be part of the first hall of residence attached to the University of London. Seeing that the noble hall is lost to the City, it cannot be put to a better use than the housing of the student and scholar who may be the More and Erasmus of the future.

Sir John Crosby was the last great personality of the London of the Middle Ages. Within a few years of his death came the revivifying flood of art and culture commonly known as the Renascence. It swept the ruins of Old London before it. A New London, with fresh aspirations and new ideals, arose in its place.

CHAPTER VI

LONDON AND THE RENASCENCE

At length they all to mery London came.
SPENSER.

The heart of London beating warm.
JOHN DAVIDSON.

THE fifteenth century dawned upon a London which had outlived the energizing intelligence, the glowing idealism of the twelfth century. The vigour and rapidity with which her political life had matured was for a while paralysed by the extravagant futilities of the Hundred Years War with France, and the still more wasteful folly of internecine warfare at home.

Feudalism, which had played no small part in shaping the destinies of Englishmen, and in giving order and solidarity in an age of anarchy and confusion, now survived only as a spent force. No longer was it adaptable to the needs of the nation.

Not even the tolerant humanity and genial humour of Chaucer can blind us to the unrest of the times. Langland and Wycliffe loudly proclaim it.

And then, looking upon those dull, blank skies, murky with storm, we see appear "a Star in the East."

There has been a stirring of fresh life, a kindling of new desires, in Italy and Germany. In each country the horizon is aglow with promise—a promise that

speaks according to the temperament of each nation. In Italy the Renascence thrills through the senses; in Germany it speaks through the intellect. Browning very happily catches the distinctive atmosphere of the two countries in "Fra Lippo Lippi" and "Johannes Agricola."

Thus it is that from the first the awakening assumed in Germany a religious character: it merged at once into the Reformation. In Italy it was different; Religion at the outset was paganized, for "The Gods descend from Olympus and live once more amongst men." Pagan influences were needed; though the sudden transition from a starved asceticism to a rich, pulsing life could not be accomplished without moral disasters. Perhaps no more significant illustration of difference in outlook can be given than in the attitude towards nudity. The mediæval artist at the portal of the Cathedral at Basle had depicted the dead rising from graves and donning hurriedly their garments, so as to appear decently clad at the Last Judgment. After the Renascence, as Jusserand has reminded us, a naked woman was wrought in bronze upon the tomb of a Pope. All that was beautiful was, through the eyes of the Renascence, also divine. The Human body, so long despised and ill-treated, came into its Kingdom and was glorified—

"Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty."

But while Italy was aglow with the New Spirit—it was still for England only a star upon the horizon.

Meanwhile a Kentish man, William Caxton, after serving his apprenticeship to a City mercer, crossed to Flanders, and in the intervals between business duties, dimmed his eyesight by much writing. Later, he became copyist in the service of Margaret of Burgundy, the sister of Edward IV., and while groaning over the

mechanical labour, he came across a new art introduced into Bruges by Colard Mansion, a clever caligrapher (about 1473).[1]

Possibly, Caxton had learned of the new art at Cologne a year or so previously, but whether this was the case or not, he gave Mansion financial assistance. When he returned to his native country he carried with him his precious Printing Press (1476), and established himself in the Almonry at Westminster, where he advertised his work thus: "If it please any man, spiritual or temporal, to buy any pyes of two or three commemorations of Salisbury all emprynted after the form of the present letter, let him come to Westminster, and he shall have them chepe." Caxton was a man of business as well as a man of letters. Probably the things which brought him most money at first were the service books and sermons which he sold to the preachers. There we see the shrewd man of affairs. In his publication of Lydgate and Gower, of Malory, and of that "worshypful man, Geoffrey Chaucer," we recognize the Man of Letters. He had a pretty taste for literature, and as early as 1468-69 translated into English a favourite mediæval romance, *Le Recueil des Histoires des Troye*. Long before becoming a printer he had been a translator, and translations occupy him still. According to his own account, he translated twenty-one books, and printed in fourteen years nearly eighty separate volumes, some of which passed through several editions.

Edward IV. and Richard III. both favoured him,—to Richard, Caxton dedicated his *Order of Chivalry*.

[1] It is possible that both Caxton and Mansion were fellow-students in the art of printing at Cologne. Evidence points to Cologne as the place of Caxton's earliest printing operations.

The Earl of Arundel allowed him "a yearly fee of a buck in summer and a doe in winter," for translating the *Golden Legend.*

The Renascence had come with Caxton, and the great nobles of the day no less than the Monarchs were stung with the desire of knowledge.

Thus the Renascence Movement in London begins with the publication of English masterpieces, awakening in the minds of the people a sense of their national life.

With the arrival of the Tudors we can no longer talk about a star upon the horizon: we are in the daylight of the Renascence.

Mention of Henry VII. usually recalls the memory of a shrewd, sagacious, and thrifty statesman, a man with a genius for practicability and cautious common sense. For the rest he does not impress himself upon us as a figure of the Renascence. But there were two Henrys; and one of them, especially marked in earlier years, was a kindly, art-loving student, somewhat reserved perhaps, but with flashes of humour, and an ardent, romantic temperament. We may recall the delight which Malory's Legends afforded him; the pleasure it gave him to surround himself with the best scholars of the day; the careful education he bestowed upon his children. He lacked the open, genial bearing of his successor; yet his tastes were as fully with the 'New Learning' as were those of his son. But he could not afford to dally with these pleasures as public affairs were then. Henry VIII. entered on a fine inheritance: his father had to build up the fortunes of the Kingdom, and to do this, continual watchfulness, never-failing prudence, and the keenest observation were required. With the Statesman, however, we are not

concerned. Henry is mentioned merely to show the Renascence Idealist in the Active Politician.

And so at the close of the fifteenth century we are upon the confines of a new City. The foundation stone of New London—the London of to-day—was laid when the Genoese seamen first sighted America from the decks of the caravel *Sancta Maria.*

Were London merely a matter of architecture, we might date our New London from our New St. Paul's, and from the streets that arose after the Fire of 1666. But, by a New London, I mean a new Civic Life—one which, with its well-defined class divisions, has lasted down to the present; that Civic Life came with the Tudors.

Consider the first consequences of the discovery of a New World in the western seas. Places which, for centuries, had seemed in the centre of the known world —Venice, for example—found themselves in isolated corners. Of course, the old trade routes were used for many, many years. But the essential fact remained, that the established balance had been radically changed. London, the old clearing-house for a national trade, suddenly became a primal factor in international dealings. The blind faith of an adventurous Genoese seafarer had put the City into the centre of a reconstituted world. The citizens found themselves controlled by the order of things resulting from this momentous change. Their outlook was, henceforth, world-wide.

But first, men had to accustom themselves to the new conditions. It is with the London of the transitional period—roughly, from 1492, when America was

discovered, to 1590, when Shakespeare's voice had begun to thrill the heart of his countrymen—that we have now to deal.

With the defeat of Richard III. at Bosworth Field, the long civil war ended. The invention of "villanous salt-petre" had given the last blow to feudalism. A mounted knight was now of less account than the men he captained. The first consequence was an immense increase in the power of the Crown. This was followed by a corresponding increase in the influence of the burgher class, also due to the lessened power of the rivals of both—the nobles. The declining influence of the Catholic Church will be treated in a separate chapter.

During the first half of the sixteenth century, the first of the new circumstances—the increasing despotism of the Crown—proved the more potent. This was the case in France as well as England. King Francis I., when he determined upon the creation of a great Court, faced exactly the same problem as Henry VIII. Both had to reconcile those who surrounded them with the new conditions. Some substitute had to be found for the work of war and governance which had hitherto occupied the nobility. Francis I. built palaces and became a generous patron of the Arts; with the example of the French King before them Henry VIII. and Wolsey were no less energetic in pursuit of the beautiful. Mention has already been made of the Palace of Bridewell which Wolsey rebuilt and which Henry VIII. redecorated for the accommodation of the Emperor Charles V. This has been lost to London, but Wolsey's other London Palace, that of Hampton Court, fortunately still remains. It was built upon the

site of a manor-house of the Knights Hospitallers, and was presented by the Cardinal to his Royal Master in 1525.

"Under the Tudors," says Mr. Ferguson in his *History of Painting*, "the Gothic style went out in a blaze of glory," and Wolsey has not unfittingly been called "the last Professor of Gothic."

The most famous part of Hampton Court Palace—certainly that most closely identified with Henry VIII.—is the Great Hall. This was begun in 1530, and completed some five years later. In general design the Hall may be compared with the Banqueting Room in Crosby's home. But it is more ornate, and therefore less chaste, than that of the merchant. As was the case at Crosby Hall, a Minstrel Gallery occupies the entrance end. Beneath was the stage upon which the King's Company of Actors appeared. The floor was paved with small tiles, and in the centre was an open hearth, the smoke of which escaped by a femerell (or louvre) in the roof above. King Harry's dais stood at the other end of the Hall. Thence he watched the mummings and the masquerades, or received his nobles and ambassadors. The Tapestries which hung upon the walls, "tenne peces of newe arras of Histories of Abraham," can still be seen in their place. They are after designs by the famous Flemish painter, Bernard Van Orley, and were doubtless made under his direction at Brussels. When an inventory was taken by the Commissioners of the Long Parliament in October 1649, the Tapestries were valued at £10 a yard, that is £8260. Fortunately they were reserved for Cromwell's use, and were not sold.

So much for the place. The life at King Hal's Court abounded in gaieties. The old chronicler,

Hall, fairly revels in the descriptions of the festivities. The impression he leaves is one of the most varied animation and jocundity. He narrates how the King, "beyng yonge and wyllyng not to be idell," occupied himself not only in "shoting, singing, daunsing, wrastling, casting of the barre and plaiyng at the recorders, flute, and virginals," but in setting songs and masses and making "ballettes."

Christmas was kept usually at Greenwich, "to cheere his nobles," and, on Twelfth Night, Henry is described as sitting a-top of a mimic mount of silk and satin, with Plantagenet flowers of flat gold of Damaske, clad in coat and cap of "right crimson velvet, embroudered with flat golde of Damaske."

Henry and Holbein

Holbein was twenty-nine years of age when he was received by Sir Thomas More at Chelsea. Six years later he became Court painter to Henry VIII. An entry in an account book of the Chamberlain's office in 1538, contains the following :—

> Payd to Hans Holbein, Paynter, a quarter due at Lady Day last—£8 : 10 : 9.

More important are the works which can still be seen in the public galleries of the City in which Hans Holbein worked.

Henry, greatly impressed by Holbein's genius, gave him a pension and an apartment at Whitehall, besides paying him for his pictures. Holbein designed the impressive gate-house which he built in front of the Palace. A story is told how that on one occasion Holbein, exasperated by the intrusion of a distinguished nobleman, thrust him down the stairs. Then fearing for

himself he sought the King and told him the whole story. Henry sent for the nobleman and threatened him with punishment if he revenged himself on Holbein. "You have not now to deal with Holbein," said the King, "but with me. Remember, that of seven peasants I can make as many lords, but I cannot make one Holbein."

Holbein's brush was not confined to the painting of King Henry and his courtiers. At times he accepted commissions from prominent citizens. Amongst other works he painted a portrait of Sir Thomas Gresham. The Barbers' Company still possess a painting of Henry VIII. granting a charter to the Company, by virtue of which the barbers and the surgeons became one body corporate. It is preserved in their hall in Monkwell Street. The painting has lasted a century or more longer than the union which it was intended to celebrate, despite the carefully drawn regulations to prevent any possibilty of friction. For instance, the barbers were enjoined that "they must only practice surgery to the extent of bleeding and of drawing teeth," and that whosoever should "use the mystery or craft of surgery should not occupy the feat or craft of barbery or shaving." However, in the eighteenth century separation became necessary. To-day Holbein's picture recalls the times when the Guild of Barber-Surgeons protected alike the interests of surgeons and perruquiers.

The second artist with whom Henry VIII. and Wolsey were associated was the sculptor Torrigiano, "Peter Torrasany of the City of Florence, Payntour," as he was entitled in the contracts. The work which he executed in London could only have been done by

a master of the sculptor's craft, and by an artist in touch with the Florentine tradition. Torrigiano is perhaps best known on account of a youthful exploit, which resulted in the breaking of Michael Angelo's nose.

No apology is needed for dwelling at some length upon the colony of Florentine artists in London during the early part of the sixteenth century. These men were the links who connected the English capital with Da Vinci, Raphael, and Michael Angelo. It would have been more pleasant to have been able to record the doings of men of London birth and London training. It must be admitted, however, that the bent of our genius in Tudor times was not in the direction of the plastic arts. Sixty or seventy years later, it was proved that the Renascence spirit could best express itself in London by means of the spoken word. Then came the Raphael and Michael Angelo of England—William Shakespeare. Nevertheless, the interest of the intervening period, though not of primary importance, is of real value.

In the early decades of the sixteenth century, there were skilled craftsmen in plenty in London. What the Age could not provide was the master-mind. Indeed Torrigiano was assisted in his first important commission by several English brass and marble workers. In 1512, the Florentine sculptor started to work upon the Royal Shrine in the Chapel of Henry VII. at Westminster Abbey. The contract provided for "a tomb of white marble and of black touchstone, with images, figures, beasts and other things of copper gilt, together with other divers images, epitaphs and other things." The cost was fixed at £1500. The English craftsmen seem to have been mainly responsible for the "screen

or closure of metall in manner of a chapell," which still surrounds Torrigiano's monument.

The Florentine sculptor's own work includes the fine recumbent portrait effigies of Henry VII. and his Queen. The tomb has also a beautifully carved frieze, and is decorated with medallions representing the Virgin and Henry's ten patron saints. A small altar guarding some precious relics—a limb of St. George, and a piece of the True Cross—stood at the foot of the tomb.

So great was Henry VIII.'s satisfaction with the work that he determined upon a similar monument to himself and Queen Katharine. The cost in this case was fixed at £2000. However, a considerable amount of bad blood was engendered during the negotiations, and, after the manner of Michael Angelo under similar circumstances, Torrigiano departed from London in a temper.

It is interesting, as illustrating the position of the foreign colonies in London, to note that Rinaldo de Ricasoli, Consul of the Republic in London, wrote to the Signory in Florence requesting them to take care that Torrigiano did not receive any of the money deposited by King Henry. The letter suggested that Torrigiano left London without the King's permission, and under circumstances detrimental to the credit of the Florentine Colony. However, by 1519 the differences were settled, and Torrigiano returned with a band of Italian artists. It will be remembered that he had failed to persuade Benvenuto Cellini to enter the service of King Henry.

Among the young Italian artists who came to London with Torrigiano were Antonio Toto and Bartholomew Penni, the painters. The frescoes in Wolsey's room at Hampton Court were by one of

these artists. Associated with them were the sculptors Giovanni da Majano and, a greater genius still, Benedetto da Rovezzano.

Benedetto da Rovezzano was the successor of Torrigiano, and his great work was the proposed tomb of Wolsey, upon which the sculptor worked for five years, and which was left unfinished owing to Wolsey's disgrace and the King's death. The sections of the tomb were preserved for a while, and it was always the wish of Charles I. to be buried in it. After the tragedy in Whitehall Parliament ordered the sale of the bronze work. Finally the marble sarcophagus was brought from Windsor. It can now be seen in the crypt of St. Paul's. The mortal remains of Horatio Nelson lie within.

It is strange that the patron of Holbein, Torrigiano, and Benedetto da Rovezzano was so largely responsible for the destruction of all earlier English sculpture and painting. Yet, as the author of the iconoclastic decrees which accompanied the Reformation, Henry VIII. cannot be acquitted from blame. The destruction of the monuments in such churches as that of the Grey Friars has already been referred to. A similar fortune overtook most of the sculptured memorials of London. In 1538, Henry issued an injunction that all images which had been worshipped, or to which idle pilgrimages had been made, should be taken down and removed from the churches. In 1541, the Duke of Somerset ordered all images without distinction to be thrown down and destroyed.

It would have been interesting to have followed the fortunes of these foreign artists more closely. But these few facts must suffice to indicate the manner in which London satisfied her artistic needs in the early

part of the sixteenth century. The travels of the greater merchants and the European tours of the young nobles became even more constant than they had been during the days of Crosby.

During the century following Crosby's death, the interests of London had broadened greatly. The importance of the discovery of America in connection with this has already been mentioned. The greater knowledge of the world which came from continual travel, and the consequences of the increase in wealth, need not be insisted upon again. But the outlook of London was not only broadened, it was deepened. The interest in art, science, and philosophy spread beyond the limits of the Court. The burgher class were no longer content with increasing their material comfort. They called for a wider knowledge—not that which was sufficient for the mere conduct of business. I have already referred to the painting which Holbein produced for the Barber's Company. In offering that commission to the Court Painter, the Barber-Surgeons had no idea of encouraging Art. They wanted a commemorative portrait group which could hang in the Company's Hall for ever. But in the next generation, an interest in art, science, literature and philosophy—for its own sake—became more general among the upper middle classes.

If the typical City burgher of the fifteenth century was Sir John Crosby, the merchant prince of sixteenth century London was Sir Thomas Gresham. He came of a commercial family. His father had been a financial confidant of Wolsey and Cromwell. In 1552, Gresham became a Royal Agent at Antwerp, acquiring thereby the intimate knowledge of countries other than his own which had stood Crosby in such good stead.

Two years later, Thomas Gresham was chosen by the Crown to negotiate a loan with Spain.

By this time London was beginning to profit by the trade changes established after the discovery of America. Eighty years earlier a deadly blow had been struck at the prosperity of Bruges, which, in the time of Crosby, had been the chief commercial centre in Northern Europe. The wealth and commercial importance of Bruges had passed to Antwerp. It would almost seem that Gresham divined the disaster which was to overtake the Flemish seaport a few years later, a disaster which finally established the commercial prosperity of London. In 1585 Antwerp was assaulted by the Spanish soldiery under the Duke of Parma. From that time the commercial supremacy of the City in Northern Europe became a thing of the past. In 1566, twenty years before the disaster at Antwerp, Thomas Gresham commenced the building of a central City Exchange. The site was provided by the Corporation, but the building was erected at Gresham's expense. It was modelled upon that of Antwerp, which had been in use since 1531. In 1570 Queen Elizabeth paid a State visit to the City and inspected Gresham's building. From that time it has borne its present name—The Royal Exchange.

One other benefaction of the great mercer must be mentioned—Gresham College. Sir Thomas left his house in Bishopsgate Street in trust to the Corporation and the Mercers' Company, four years before his death in 1579. His purpose was to endow a College where lectures in divinity, astronomy, music, geometry, civil law, physic, and rhetoric might be given. Many changes have taken place in connection with the bequest. The locale is no longer at Gresham House

(where, by the way, the founders of the Royal Society first met in 1645), but in the new building close to the Guild Hall. The lectures, however, have been delivered continually since June 1597. Gresham's determination to provide popular instruction in the *humanities* argues a very general interest in these subjects at a considerably earlier period.

As a fact, prior to Gresham's death in 1579, there was little philosophy of native origin in London. Paris, and, still more, such towns as Rome, Milan, and Florence were far in advance of the English metropolis. The best educated men, whether among the courtiers or the richer burghers, derived their experience during their travels. Their second source of inspiration came from the foreigners resident in London.

How deeply London was indebted to its Italian colony, in the decade before Shakespeare's plays were given to the world, can best be illustrated by some account of the visit of Giordano Bruno to London. The experiences of the Nolan philosopher also accentuate strongly the world-wide influences which gathered in London for the making of Shakespeare.

England had received the teaching of the Italian humanists on their political and ecclesiastical sides with willingness. But it had been slow to learn the artistic and intellectual lessons which the pioneers of the New Learning brought to her doors. Such a man as Colet valued Greek for the insight it gave him into the meaning of the New Testament.

In France, however, the Italian example had resulted in such poetry as that of Joachim du Bellay. In the year 1570, France was at least a generation ahead of England in her intellectual and artistic development. But every year decreased the difference. By 1580 the

Arcadia had been written; seven years later Marlowe staged *Tamburlaine*. It was in the interval between the *Arcadia* and *Tamburlaine* that Bruno came to London.

Twenty-five years earlier, Francis of Guise had taken Calais. England's last possession on the European continent had been lost. In other words, the dream of a Continental Empire which had haunted the imaginations of the island rulers for five centuries, had faded into the dim realms of the unrealisable, thirteen years before Bruno's arrival.

The Bull of Pius V., deposing Elizabeth, had decided the Queen upon following the policy of isolation which her political sagacity had already divined to be her country's best safeguard. Since the Norman Conquest, English rulers had been struggling to bring into being an unnatural Empire. Now England withdrew herself from the world. For twenty years she communed with her soul. Her best energies no longer flowed from the country, there was an intense concentration of the national power.

A most interesting letter from Gabriel Harvey to Edmund Spenser gives a vivid idea of the general intellectual unrest. "Light, more light," was the only cry. Harvey, of course, wrote as one of the older school.

Tully and Demosthenes nothing so much studied as they were wont. Lucian never so much. Aristotle much named but little read. Xenophon and Plato reckoned amongst the discoursers and conceited superficial fellows; much verbal and sophistical jangling; little subtle and effectual disputing. Machiavel a great man, Castilio of no small repute; Petrarch and Boccace in every man's mouth. . . . *The Light, the Light* on every man's lips, but mark their eyes and you will say they

are rather like owls than eagles. . . . Every day spawns new opinions; heresy in divinity, in philosophy, in humanity, in manners, grounded upon hearsay; doctors contemn'd; the *devil* not so hated as the *Pope*.

It was at this moment that Bruno, the Baptist of modern idealism, preaching the gospel of the Infinite on the edge of the barren wastes of Mediæval Thought, reached London.

Of Bruno's experiences at Oxford nothing need be said. A Londoner's interest in his doings commences when the Nolan reached the City in June 1583. He brought letters of introduction from Henry III. of France to the ambassador Castelnau de Mauvissiere. The French embassy was then located at Beaumont House in Butcher Row, leading from Wych Street to the Strand. The Ambassador and his wife treated the Nolan with great generosity, and through their aid he doubtless was introduced to the humanist courtiers who surrounded the Virgin Queen.

Though doubt has been thrown upon Bruno's friendship with such men as Sir Philip Sidney and Fulke Greville, there is really no occasion for refusing to accept the philosopher's statement.

Statesmen like Dudley, Walsingham, Sir Philip Sidney, and Fulke Greville were all familiar with Italian. It held the place that French does to-day, and was often used as the common tongue in discussions between the English courtiers and the Spanish and French Ambassadors. One of the Venetian envoys at the Court of Elizabeth, writing in 1575, noted that at a dinner given him by Cecil, when the entire Privy Council was present, the conversation was carried on chiefly in Italian; "almost all of them speaking our Italian tongue, or at least all understand it."

John Lyly had published *Euphues* in 1579, and the Euphuistic craze was at its height. Italians were welcomed at Court as they had been in France a couple of generations earlier by Francis the First. Among them was the Jack of all trades, Petruccio Ubaldini, miniaturist, illuminator, wit, and historian; John Florio, later known as the translator of Montaigne—Florio, no scholar, but the hail-fellow-well-met of the colony.

Bruno's famous dialogue, the "Ash-Wednesday Supper," suggests the terms upon which the Italian fraternized with the English courtiers. As a record of the manners and methods of the "intellectuals" gathered around Elizabeth's person, the dialogue is unique.

According to Bruno, Greville had suggested a discussion upon the merits and demerits of the Copernican Theory. He named his own rooms as a rendezvous, apparently not at Brooke House in Holborn, but somewhere near Whitehall. No further message came from Greville, however, and no intimation that a carriage would wait upon the Italian at his residence to take him across the town. Consequently, Bruno did not go. Meanwhile, Fulke Greville had gathered a select company of scholars or courtiers, which awaited the lion of the evening. At last, Florio and Gwynne (afterwards a Gresham Professor) volunteered to go as far as Temple Bar to see what was detaining the Nolan. Their joint entreaties mollified the sharp tempered Italian.

In a few minutes the three were on their way to Fulke Greville's house. Doubtless, to avoid the crowds of high-spirited apprentices, ever ready for a little horse-play, the party made for the river stairs leading from Dorset House to the Thames, hoping to pick up

a boatman. The second dialogue of the "Ash-Wednesday Supper" pictures the light-hearted Italians drowning in song the memory of past misfortunes and the possibility of a lost supper.

It would have been pleasant to have set down a detailed account of this journey across Elizabethan London as recorded in the "Ash-Wednesday Supper" dialogue. It would have been still more satisfactory to have been able to relate the arguments, *pro* and *con*, which arose from the eminently debateable topic chosen by Fulke Greville.

Doubtless, after the manner of Socrates, or to take an example from nearer our own time, of Coleridge, Bruno dominated the discussion. Under the guidance of his agile fancy and lofty imagination, the speculations roamed from earth to heaven and heaven to earth. Bruno's image of the mortal soul :—

> That kicks at earth with a disdainful heel
> And beats at heaven's gate with her bright hoofs—

became a realisable thing. Every man in Greville's party must have come to know the beauty and worth of the Nolan's speculations. They went forth to carry into the market-place Bruno's conception of an infinite universe animated by a great life spirit. Through such gatherings, the world-philosophy of the Elizabethan Age became part of the body of common thought upon which Shakespeare and his fellow dramatists were nourished.

Of course, the philosophical discussion in Fulke Greville's room was not a unique event. Among the "intellectuals" of Elizabeth's Court these disputations were of common occurrence. Doubtless, the custom arose from the public debates which were a feature in

Elizabethan university life. From a public to a private "disputation," the transition was an easy one. The literary society known as the "Areopagus," which was frequented by Harvey, Greville, Sidney, Dyer, and Spenser is a further example. The "atheistical conferences" of Raleigh, Marlowe, Harriot, and Richard Carew is another.

Thus it was that a few artists and philosophers set the seed of Italian Renascence Thought and Feeling in the fruitful soil of the English Capital.

Music.—Music has always figured prominently in the social life of Englishmen, though we must admit that as a nation our affection for the Art is not remarkable for its discrimination. The average Englishman is rather like the gentleman in the story who is reported to have sung very well until tunes came up! Under Renascence influence there is very marked progress in the history of the English schools; and one of the most noticeable things is the attention given by the Monarchs themselves to the Art. Henry VIII. was an accomplished composer, and his anthem, 'O Lorde, the Maker of all Thyngs,' has been warmly praised by musicians. Under his supervision the music in the Chapel Royal reached a high level of excellence, and received the warm commendations of the foreign ambassadors.

Both Elizabeth and Mary Stuart were proficient performers upon the virginal. John Redford, organist of old St. Paul's, wrote some fine anthems. Indeed, Church music generally was of remarkable excellence, and it is to be regretted that so much of it was destroyed at a later period by the Puritans. Elizabeth's reign marks the era of the great writers of Madrigal.

Mediæval counterpoint was now a thing of the past, and madrigals, such as that of Dr. Christopher Tye, Thomas Tallys, and William Byrd, are scarcely less dear to the generation of to-day than they were to their own time. Some idea of the effect of the Renascence upon the ceremonial of the time may be gathered from the history of old Whitehall under the Tudors.

York House, as Whitehall Palace had been called for about three hundred years,[1] was the residence of Wolsey, as Archbishop of York. He was the last ecclesiastic to use it, for after Wolsey's death Henry, in accordance with a little habit of his, appropriated it to his own use.

But at no time, before or after, was York House the scene of so much gorgeous display and lordly magnificence. Two handsome rooms—the Gilt and the Council Chambers, held tables loaded with costly plate; plate of solid gold and valuable precious stones gleamed magnificently from a window recess. In the gallery, rich brocades, velvets, damasks, satins, cloths of silver and gold, covered the walls and all available spaces. In Wolsey's train were eight hundred people, and even his cook rejoiced in a necklet of gold and a satin jerkin.

As for the Archbishop himself—even the late Lord Anglesey would have confessed to failure by comparison with the sumptuousness of his attire. The richest crimson silks and satins; wonderful sables, silver gilt shoes inlaid with pearls and diamonds; red silk gloves, and the imposing scarlet Cardinal's hat—which when he appeared in public was borne before him by a "person of rank."

[1] Originally built by the Justiciar Hubert de Burgh, it is said to have passed into the hands of the Dominicans, who sold it to Walter de Grey, Archbishop of York (1248).

His biographer, Cavendish, gives us some idea of the magnificent scale on which he entertained :—

And when it pleased the King's Majesty, for his recreation, to repair unto the Cardinal's house, as he did divers times in the year, at which time there wanted no preparations or goodly furniture, with viands of the finest sort that might be provided for money or friendship. Such pleasures were there devised for the King's comfort and consolation, as might be invented, or by man's wit imagined. The banquets were set forth with masks and mummeries in so gorgeous a sort and costly manner that it was a heaven to behold. There wanted no dames and damsels meet or apt to dance with the maskers, or to garnish the place for the time, with other goodly disports. There was all kind of music and harmony set forth with excellent voices both of men and children. I have seen the King suddenly come thither in a mask, with a dozen of other maskers; all in garments like shepherds, made of fine cloth of gold and fine crimson satin . . . and caps of the same . . . their hair and beards . . . either of fine gold wire, or else of silver, and some being of black silk, having sixteen torchbearers beside their drums, and other persons attending upon them, with visors and clothed all in satin of the same colours. And at his coming and before he came into the hall, ye shall understand that he came by water to the water-gate without any noise; where against his coming were laid charged many chambers, and at his landing they were all shot off which made such a rumble in the air that it was like thunder. It made all the noblemen, ladies, and gentlemen to muse what it should mean coming so suddenly, they sitting quietly at a solemn banquet.

Such occasions were not the only ones when Henry's behaviour caused his subjects 'to muse.' No doubt the shock of more than 'mild surprise' which he imparted added considerably to his 'comfort and consolation.'

So greatly did Henry appreciate the pleasures of the Palace, that he decided to take the place of his host :

and Wolsey must have realized bitterly as his barge meandered slowly down the Thames away from the scene of his greatness, that his days were over. To such a man, ignominious obscurity was worse than death.

Whitehall next figures prominently in the reign of Elizabeth. Edward's simple, boyish tastes, and Mary's religious mania were not conducive to sumptuous doings. But under the Virgin Queen the glories of Whitehall revived. And the glories were less material than in Henry's time. By now the tide of Renascence Culture was at its full; and Whitehall was the centre of wit and fantasy. Even in the ceremonial displays there is a touch of fancy which we miss in earlier days. In 1581, a great tournament was given in the Tilt Yard, which created considerable sensation in an Age inured to sensations of this character. The Queen sat in the Gallery of the Palace, which was politely christened 'the castle or fortress of perfect beauty,' and a mimic fight took place between Beauty's Defenders and Desire with his foster children, who attacked the Palace. One of the combatants bore the familiar name of Master Philip Sidney: Desire, expressing himself musically in the stress of emotion, cried :—

> Yield, yield, O yield you that this fort do hold,
> Which sealed is in spotless honour's field;
> Desire's great force no forces can withhold;
> Then to Desire's desire, O yield! O yield!

The Defenders proved obstinate to these touching blandishments, whereupon "two cannon were fired off, one with sweet powder and the other with sweet water; and after these were store of pretty scaling ladders, and then the footmen threw flowers and such fancies against the walls with all such devices as might seem shot from Desire."

The end of the contest between Desire and Beauty took place on the following day, and ended in glittering showers of compliments, which Elizabeth doubtless (as was her wont) found very comforting.

As a matter of fact, pleasing as Elizabeth had been as a young woman, she was now most unattractive. Hentzner, who visited England in 1598, describes her as having a wrinkled face, hooked nose, shining lips, and black teeth, though as greedy as ever of the adulation concerning her looks by compliant courtiers.

In an Age when Poetry and the Drama were flowering so abundantly, and when the graceful poet was also an accomplished courtier, it is not surprising that the spark of divine inspiration was attributed also to the Queen. This was the compliment-intellectual.

A somewhat curious book on the Art of English Poesy was published in 1589. Addressed to the Queen, it contains a dedication by the Printer to Burleigh; the author, as did a famous sonneteer of the time, elected to remain anonymous. However, its authorship was traced ultimately to Puttenham, "one of her Majesty's gentlemen pensioners." He refers to the "New company of courtly makers, of whom Sir Thomas Wyat the elder, and Henry Earl of Surrey, were the two Chieftains," then passes from the time of Henry the Eighth, with a slight reference to the intermediate period, to 'her Majesty's time that now is.' Here he discovers "another crew of courtly makers, noblemen and gentlemen of her Majesty's own servants, who have written excellently well." He praises, "for Eglogue and pastoral poesy, Sir Philip Sidney and Master Chaloner, and that other gentleman who wrote the tale *Shepherd's Calendar*." 'The other gentleman'

was Edmund Spenser, who had published his work under the signature of 'Immerito.' Spenser was a man of fine culture and sensitive imagination, but, ten years after Puttenham's book was published, he came to a miserable end, starved to death, a homeless wanderer in King Street, Westminster.

Puttenham praises also, "for ditty and amorous ode," Sir Walter Raleigh, whose vein he finds "most lofty, insolent, and passionate." Elizabeth's own literary qualifications are extolled with the customary fulsomeness that was expected.

Puttenham's work is more interesting perhaps for the light it throws on contemporary speech, and on the love of similes and metaphors, which Euphuism did much to popularize, and which Shakespeare pleasantly satirizes in *Love's Labour's Lost.* He comes down severely upon some unfortunate translator of Virgil, who inquires, "What moved Juno to *tug* so great a captain." A word, says Puttenham indignantly, "the most indecent in this case that could have been devised, since it is derived from the cart, and signifies the draught or pull of the horses." He further says, "it is esteemed . . . an imperfection in a man's utterance to have none use for guise at all; specially in our writings and speeches public, making them but as our ordinary talk, than which nothing can be more unsavoury and far from all civility."

This is characteristic of an Age that one may fairly call word-intoxicated. One result of the Renascence had been to flood the Saxon tongue with precious tributary streams from the great masterpieces of Greece and Rome.

Dazzled and exultant, and with imagination fired by the splendid vista opened up, Englishmen realised of a

sudden the magic of words, and like children who have discovered a new toy, the joy and zest with which they used this pageantry of Letters led them at times into affectations and absurdities. And yet, even Euphuism was at bottom merely an indiscreet use of a noble freedom—the freedom to glory in the colour and music of the Saxon Tongue. Drake and Raleigh brought back no such treasures from the Atlantic seas as Marlowe and Shakespeare wrought with cunning workmanship from the rough ore of the English language.

No greater gift was brought us by the Renascence than the gift of tongues.

CHAPTER VII

LONDON AND THE REFORMATION

. . . London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed.
GRAY (On the Tower of London).

THAT sinister sentinel on the confines of London Town—the Tower—has in past ages served as palace, fortress, and prison, and the significance of this grey brooding pile of masonry in Tudor times is notorious.

There is no more miserable chapter in the history of London than the medley of bloodshed, callous brutality, and religious ecstasy that go to make up the story of the Reformation movement. The worst side of the period is exemplified here ; elsewhere the purposefulness, the eager enterprise, the self-confidence, the zest for life, the varied interests, the abundant gaiety, present features picturesque and attractive to the historian of manners. But the savagery, the ignorant brutality of the people at large, the revolting cruelty of those in power—these Tudor qualities are brought home to us with little to redeem them in the religious history of the day. The annals of the Tower bear gruesome witness to these facts. It is true that the Tower served other purposes than those of cruel jailor. There is feasting and merriment at the Coronation of the two unfortunate Queens, Catharine of Arragon and Anne

Boleyn. The chronicler, Hall, speaks delightedly of 'marvellous cunning pageants'; and the stern old Tower assumes as smiling and festive an aspect as it can manage. But these fitful gleams of scarlet and gold, these occasional flashes of gaiety, serve but to intensify the sullen gloom that predominated.

Cruelty and bloodshed were part of Henry's ritual of mirth; he had the same gusto for an execution as he had for a pageant or a banquet. His capricious cruelty was due, I think, less to an intolerance for those who gainsaid him (indeed he was curiously tolerant at times) than to a craving for the emotional excitement afforded by the bloody horrors on Tower Hill or at Tyburn.

There is no need to dwell here upon the procession of Prisoners who passed and repassed those gates. A few there were, like the extortioners Empson and Dudley, who perished unmourned, unregretted; but among the majority were some of the finest souls, the most commanding intellects of the time. One recalls Suffolk, 'audacious, strong, and prompt in council'; the ambitious Buckingham, who 'show'd a most noble patience'; the heroic and saintly Carthusians; the aged, lion-hearted Fisher; the incomparable More; Anne Boleyn, bright, witty, and unfortunate; poor Anne Askew; Cromwell, brilliant and unscrupulous; Lady Jane Grey, cultured and fine souled; the people's idol, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex.

Against the majority of these no charge worthy of the name offence could honestly be brought. But of that unpardonable crime, faithfulness to their convictions, almost all were guilty. Perhaps the case of Anne Askew, beyond others, illustrates the peculiar cruelty of the time.

Anne came of an old Lincolnshire family, and was early married to a Mr. Kyme, though she is more familiarly known by her maiden name. It is said that she belonged to the personal retinue of Queen Catharine Parr, and she seems to have been known at Court. Her husband was a strong Roman Catholic, she herself an equally strong Protestant. In manner she was quiet and sweet-natured, but firm and faithful to an extraordinary degree. Summoned to the Guildhall in March 1545, she was examined at length, and her "modest, gentle demeanour drew the admiration even of her enemies." Afterwards Bishop Bonner interrogated her, and twisted her words to suit his wishes, but owing to the intervention of her friends she was released for the time being on bail. Later on she was re-arrested, and brought before the Privy Council at Greenwich. As she refused to accept the doctrine of Transubstantiation, she was committed to Newgate. The next scene is at the Guildhall once again, when she is told plainly that if she cannot 'renounce her errors' she must die. She persists with the same gentleness and firmness as she had always shown. It may be that this gentleness and simplicity were construed as a latent weakness, and this time she goes to the Tower to await the horrors of Torture. For it was hoped that she might betray her friends, who had previously come to her help in prison.

Then this sensitive, delicate girl was carried to a dungeon, and placed on the Rack. She bore the fiendish torture with wonderful bravery. No words passed her lips, though in the physical agony of the moment no reproach could have attached to anything she had said. Many a brave man, who has faced weary, painful imprisonment and certain death without

betraying his friends, had broken down before the exquisite torture of these pulleys. But this poor child uttered no sound.

Wriothesley, the Chancellor, the miserable brute who had previously examined her and was present at the torture, was so angered at her fortitude that he seized "the wheel himself, strained with all his force," till Knyvett (the Lieutenant of the Tower, and assuredly no squeamish sentimentalist), "revolting at such cruelty, insisted on her release from the dreadful machine."

But she was hopelessly crippled, and even Smithfield can have held no further terrors for her. Hither she was brought shortly afterwards and burned to ashes—in the presence of Wriothesley and other "noble peers," who with the mob apparently enjoyed the spectacle.

Londoners viewed the rack with disfavour, and therefore it was used secretly. But no lingering death, whether of heroic priest or brave woman, stirred their compassion. The mob that witnessed the burnings in Mary's reign were far more sympathetic; but here what moved them was not the sight of human beings suffering a terrible death, so much as of men dying for a cause which they were beginning to associate with the enemies of England.

If in the treatment of Anne Askew we see an instance of the tyrannical cruelty with which a simple unoffending woman is treated, in that of Sir Thomas More we realise, not merely the brutality, but the wanton folly of destroying so much "fundamental brain power."

Cromwell, unimaginative and materialistic, may have felt no qualms at the death of More, who was merely something in the way of his schemes, and had to go. But Henry, who knew the man so well and had been

more like a personal friend than a King to him, must have had misgivings, selfish and unscrupulous as he was.

It was an ill day for the witty author of *The Utopia* when Henry VIII. called him from the quiet seclusion of his Chelsea house and thrust honours upon him. Many envied him, but he only smiled, and said to his son-in-law, when the latter was congratulating him: "I find his Grace my very good Lord indeed; and I believe he doth favour me as any subject within this realm. However, Son Roper, I may tell thee I have no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head would win him a castle in France, it should not fail to go."

Meanwhile he accepted his responsibilities with quiet dignity, and as Lord Chancellor (1529) was especially conspicuous for the honesty and sagacity he displayed. One could have wished that he had shown in practice more of the religious tolerance which he had preached in his *Utopia*. But the very idea of tolerance was so alien to the spirit of the age that it is something to find a man admitting its beneficence, even if only in theory.

The Divorce question had caused the fall of Wolsey. And this proved More's downfall also. From the outset, he was unequivocal in his attitude, and so exemplary had been his conduct, that his enemies were worsted in their attempts to foist a charge upon him.

But he realised that the end was near—"What is prolonged is not dropped," he said to his daughter, with sad wisdom.

The Act of Supremacy (1534) brought matters to a close. Refusing to take the Oath acknowledging the King as Head of the Church, he was thrown into the Tower, and, after a parody of a trial, condemned to death.

"After his condemnation," wrote his great-grandson, Cresacre More, "he was conducted from the bar to the Tower again, an axe being carried before him with the edge towards him, and was led by Sir William Kingston, a tall, strong, and comely gentleman, constable of the Tower, and his very good friend; but presently a doleful spectacle was presented to Sir Thomas and all the standers by, for his only son, my grandfather, like a dutiful child, casteth himself at his father's feet, craving humbly his blessing, not without tears, whom he blessed, and kissed most lovingly, whose love and obedience Sir Thomas after in a letter praised, saying, that this his behaviour pleased him greatly.

"When Sir William had conducted Sir Thomas to the Old Swan, towards the Tower, there he bade him farewell with a heavy heart, the tears appearing down his cheeks; but Sir Thomas, with a staid gravity, seeing him sorrowful, began to comfort him with these cheerful speeches, saying, 'Good Mr. Kingston, trouble not yourself, but be of good cheer, for I will pray for you, and my good lady your wife, that we may meet in heaven together, where we shall be merry for ever and ever.'"

The Porter at Traitor's Gate[1] asked More for his cloak, and the condemned man cheerfully gave him, with regrets that they were not better, both cap and cloak.

In default of proper writing materials More inscribed a farewell letter to his daughter—"Written with a cole by your tender, loving father."

The same humour and dignity which had marked him throughout his life attended him to the very last. The Lieutenant of the Tower questioned him as to why he kept his cell so gloomy; to which More replied, "When all the wares are gone, the shop-windows are shut up."

[1] One recalls the lines of Samuel Rogers:—

"On through that gate misnamed, through which before
Went Sidney, Russell, Raleigh, Cranmer, More."

When he was told that the King had been "mercifully pleased" to allow him the luxury of death by beheading, in place of the gruesome "hang, drawn, and quartered," he said, "God forbid the King shall use any more such mercy to any of my friends."

It is impossible to better the description of his death given by his son-in-law, Roper:—

And so he was brought by Master Lieutenant out of the Tower, and from thence led towards the place of execution, where, going up the scaffold, which was so weak that it was ready to fall, he said to Master Lieutenant—"I pray you, I pray you, Master Lieutenant, see me safe up, and for my coming down let me shift for myself." Then desired he all the people thereabouts to pray for him, and to bear witness with him that he should then suffer death in and for the faith of the Holy Catholic Church. Which done, he kneeled down, and after his prayers said, he turned to the executioner, and with a cheerful countenance spake unto him—"Pluck up thy spirits, man, and be not afraid to do thine office, my neck is very short. Take heed therefore thou strike not awry for saving thine honesty." So passed Sir Thomas More out of this world to God, upon the very same day in which himself had most desired.

The Reformation in England under Henry the Eighth is animated truly by no great principle; but brutalizing as were many of the sights Londoners witnessed in his day, the storm of Religious dissension was raging abroad with more terrible accompaniments. Nothing in London under any of the Tudors equalled the horrors of the Sack of Rome in 1527, or the Massacre of St. Bartholomew at Paris in 1572.

The history of the Reformation is part of the National History, and much of it does not concern us here. It is for us to trace these points in the develop-

ment of the movement which affected Londoners in particular, drawing upon the general history of the time so far only as may help to make the picture clear.

1. The Monasteries and the Reformation.
2. The Populace and the Reformation.

In dealing with the first, we must consider the destructive side of the movement. In the second, we shall note how the Preachers of the day had a share in shaping constructively the opinion of the day. Though, so far as the mass of the people was concerned, social or political always triumphed over religious reasons. The Englishman of every age has rarely interested himself in religious matters save when these matters have touched some point of civic or political life.

(1) *The Monastic Houses.* — The attitude of the modern socialist towards the wealthy leisured class fairly represents the attitude of the people at large towards the Monasteries in the early sixteenth century. The Monks were both rich and idle, and the streets of London teemed with such men. Of what use were they to the community at large? The charge of excessive wealth could not be brought against many of the Friars, but they were open to suspicion on the grounds of moral deterioration, and numbers of them were no better than cunning, interfering idlers. As for the charges of sexual immorality brought against the Religious Houses, when we come to examine the facts it is doubtful whether the popular opinion as to their wholesale corruption deserves credence. The reports are gross enough, it is true, but in what circumstances were those reports prepared? Assuredly by men whose interest it was to prove their case.

I do not think that the warmest upholder of monasticism would deny the existence of corruption at certain centres. And Father Gasquet, the ablest of the Roman Catholic historians, has admitted that the Monasteries had fallen from their pristine high estate, and were open to criticism early in the sixteenth century. The debateable point is—how widespread was this corruption, and on this point the evidence of the commissioners should be received certainly with reservation. Apart from their reports, however, it is clear that morals were lax. Friar Peto, the famous preacher at Greenwich (to whom further reference is made later), admitted the existence of serious abuses, and approved of the dissolution of the monasteries, provided the endowments were used for proper ends. In fact, one could prove the decay of monastic morals from the admission of the Roman and English Catholics themselves. Nor, when we reflect, need we depend on extraneous testimony. Enforced celibacy is bound, sooner or later, to revenge itself upon its professors. It is an outrage on Nature, for which Nature does not fail to exact the penalty.

In London, the question of the Divorce influenced the King largely in the work of Suppression. The Carthusians, at Charterhouse, had preserved their reputation unsullied. No attack could be made upon them on moral grounds. But naturally they could not be expected to accept Henry as Head of the Church. So, in the Spring of 1534, the Community was visited and the signatures of the Fathers demanded to the Oath of Succession. The Prior, John Houghton, refused, declaring that "he could not understand how it was possible that a marriage ratified by the Church and so long unquestioned, could be undone." So said

his brethren. Houghton and some brother Priors were committed to the Tower, and in 1535, when challenged on the question of Henry's Supremacy, declined roundly to take the Oath. This was accounted treason, and Houghton and they were taken to Tyburn. Each was offered a pardon, as he mounted the scaffold, and each refused. Before he suffered a terrible death, Houghton briefly addressed the people, declaring it was from 'no obstinate rebellious spirit' that he did not obey the King, but because he feared 'to offend the Majesty of God.' Then asking for their prayers, he resigned himself into the hands of his executioners. A ghastly account is given of the scene by a contemporary. Before they were dead the most fiendish butcheries were performed—grim commentaries on the callous brutality of the Age. And after the quartering of their bodies, as a ghastly reminder, the arm of the Prior was affixed to the gateway of the Charterhouse.

It was thought that this terrible business would awe the remaining brothers into submission. Henry was mistaken. Of those who remained, many suffered protracted tortures, without yielding; the survivors were expelled in 1539, and the Monastery was turned into a storage place for implements of warfare.

Even more remarkable than the fiendish cruelty of the persecutions of the times was the marvellous fortitude of the Martyrs—Catholic and Protestant alike.

There is no doubt that the treatment of these men was deliberately cruel, in order to impress the popular imagination with the power of the King in religious matters. A huge concourse had come to witness Houghton executed.

Why, it may be asked, did the citizens of London tolerate all this? It is clear that there was no decisive

feeling against either Henry or Cromwell at the time.

Apart from the barbarities, which would not affect the rough, coarse-fibred Tudor as it affects the sensitive modern reader, we have to remember that the Middle Classes endured Cromwell's work largely from motives of self-interest; the poorer classes accepted the situation —much as a General Election is accepted to-day by many—in the hope that "the other party" would bring about a better state of things for themselves. Finally, while good-humouredly tolerating many preachments against himself, Henry tried skilfully to organize public opinion at the time of the Dissolution, by appointing preachers who should dwell upon the evils of monasticism, and should "sweet the people's ears," by assuring them of the benefits they would reap by the Dissolution.

Monasticism in London had a cleaner record than in the country at large.

There are many charges of laxity which have been proven, but this, of course, is another matter. The admonition of the Dean of St. Paul's to the Nuns of St. Helen's deals with laxity, not vice; and there are many such. Then again, considering the anxiety on the part of the "visitor" to prove a case against them, it is significant that so few specific accusations were made against the London Houses.

The statement laid before Parliament praised the greater monasteries, but condemned the lesser on the score of slackness and immorality. It is only fair to remember, however, that the Superiors of these lesser Houses often had no means of meeting the charges, which were certainly not unprejudiced. Granted that in certain cases such a condition of things did exist, its

extent is an open question; and in the absence of more satisfactory evidence, it would be fairer to suspend our judgment. It is somewhat suspicious, moreover, that the Abbots and Priors of the wealthier Houses were represented in Parliament, and well able to defend themselves. The Suppression of the Houses later on was dictated almost entirely by political considerations.

It is curious that Stow[1] should devote so little space to the Dissolution of the Monasteries. He deals far too briefly with the matter, and gives us no decisive information as to how the people viewed these measures. Once he flashes out in wrath when, in a passage dealing with Wolsey's suppression of a certain House, he says: "But of thys irreligious robberie, done of no conscience, but to patch up pride, which private wealthe could not furnish—what punishment hath since enjoined at God's hand partly ourselves have seene."

Wolsey, zealous for the 'New Learning,' could not resist the opportunity of seizing hold of these fine and spacious Houses for his Colleges. Thomas Cromwell, less interested in scholarship than his illustrious contemporary, marked them down as sources of revenue.

Only one Abbey was within the City, though there were many Priories. But many great abbots had land in London, and when Westminster, Barking, and Bermondsey fell, and voids were left in districts such as Whitefriars, Blackfriars, Smithfield, Charterhouse, and others, a strange desolation filled the City. Some of the Convents had sheltered sick people, and for these no provision was made. Thus the blind, the lame, and

[1] Born 1525.

the halt were flung upon the world—a world that had no room for them—and in desperation the Mayor and Aldermen petitioned the King for places for "the relyeff, comforte, and ayde of the poore and indygent." Subsequently, the hospital of St. Bartholomew was refitted for them, also the hospital of St. Thomas in Southwark; and the ancient Palace of Bridewell was turned into a workhouse.

Cromwell and his followers found comfortable places for themselves out of the confiscated estates. The site of the Priory of Crutched Friars was given to Sir Thomas Wyatt; and Charterhouse, after passing through several hands, found its way into the possession of Dudley, Earl of Northumberland.

Cromwell's Work in the City (1530-38).—Summarizing the destructive work of Cromwell in London, we may begin with the appropriation of Elsing Spital (1530)—a house originally established for the relief of the blind, but latterly a wealthy Augustinian Priory. In 1531, the Priory of Holy Trinity, Aldgate, shared a like fate. Then came a short respite for the City. But in 1534 we have the shameful treatment of the Charterhouse, already referred to, and by the end of 1538 the houses of the Black Friars, the Grey Friars, and the White Friars were swept away. He embittered Stow by his demolition of a house belonging to Stow's aged father, for the purpose of enlarging his own: no word of warning or explanation had been given. Finally, the Priory of St. Helen Without Bishopsgate was surrendered in 1542. The Nuns' Chapel was given to a nephew of Cromwell's, and the refectory passed into the hands of the Leathersellers' Company, forming their hall until the close of the eighteenth century.

Dr. Sharpe has pointed out that, "in one respect at least, Cromwell's action in suppressing religious houses resulted in a benefit to the City of London as well as to the country at large, and this was in the Institution of Parish Registers, not only for baptisms, but also for marriages."

The most mischievous part of Cromwell's work lay in the wanton destruction of so many useful and beneficent City Hospitals without taking care to see that the sick poor would otherwise be provided for. The City authorities did their best, and collections were made on Sundays at Paul's Cross, but there was much suffering and distress which could find no adequate alleviation. Finally, after a petition to the King, St. Bartholomew's Hospital was re-established in 1544, and to this was added the Monastery of the Grey Friars and the hospital of Bethlehem in 1547, a few days previous to his death.

But although one may deplore the methods of the political reformers—the wilful spoliation, the shameless appropriation,—the Monastic system itself was doomed.

It had played its part, and on the whole a noble and lofty part, in the life of the Middle Ages. Born in an age rude and noisy with the clash of barbarian invasions, it had served as a shelter from the violence and grossness of the world not only for the devotee but for the student. Quiet, meditative study could only be obtained within its walls. It had served, moreover, as a centre for culture, industry, and philanthropy, as well as of piety.

(2) *The Populace and the Reformation.*—The attitude of the average citizen in Tudor times was much the same as the attitude of the ordinary practical common-

sense Englishman of to-day. He was coarser, more superstitious, less cultured; but for the rest there was the dogged, persistent, not over-sensitive compromising spirit that we find in the twentieth century.

The people at large accepted Protestantism finally for political rather than religious reasons; the Reformers had not endeared themselves to the mass; but Smithfield under Mary did for the Reformation what all Hooper's earnestness and Ridley's eloquence could not effect. By their deaths the Reformers did more for the Reformation than they had effected in their lives. Men forgot the fanaticism of Hooper in the sublime heroism with which he faced an agonizing death.

When Latimer exclaimed to his fellow-sufferer, Ridley, "We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out," he uttered no idle rhetoric.

No doubt, the orgie of persecution under Mary had sated even the brutal appetites of that time; assuredly it must have done so when bystanders even tried to throw themselves into the flames and die by the martyr's side.

Mary's persecuting zeal had made the Reformation an accomplished fact. For the future it was a question of exposition. With the arrival of the shrewd level-headed Elizabeth came a time of comparative peace. If not with the Radical Reformers, the people were, at any rate, against Catholicism. The Englishman loves fair play; and his sense of justice had been rudely violated under Mary. And when the Church was settled finally upon 'the best and surest foundation'—a *vid media* between the claims of Geneva and Rome,—then he was quite content. It was as he wished, a thoroughly English, and therefore satisfactory settlement.

Mary herself is more to be pitied than blamed. She was a genuine religious enthusiast—who desired the salvation of England from its Protestant backsliding. But she was forsaken by the man for whom she cared, and for whose sake she had braved the country's displeasure. And her days were dark and bitter. Cold-shouldered by the Pope, hated by her people, neglected by Philip; longing for children—and childless: shadowed by the curse of a mortal disease; she indeed merits our compassion. So entirely did she fail; so completely were all her hopes shattered.

Paul's Cross and the Preachers.—The era of the great Preachers at Paul's Cross begins in the reign of Henry the Eighth; the previous preachers were all Court Officials. Not that under Henry there was a lack of engineered doctrine, but there were also, now and later, many vigorous independent preachers, both Catholic and Protestant.

There was at the East End of St. Paul's Cathedral an open piece of ground, where the citizens in mediæval times assembled for the folk-moot, and for making parade of arms for keeping the King's peace. Here it was that Paul's cross was situate; here also was the huge clangorous bell which bade the citizens attend folk-moot, or called them to the muster of arms.

In the earlier years of Stow the Bell Tower was still standing, and he refers to it thus:—

Near unto the School (St. Paul's) on the north side thereof, was of old time a great and high Clochier or Bell House, with four bells, the greatest that I have heard: these were called Jesus bells, and belonged to Jesus Chapel, but I know not by whose gift. The same had a great spire of timber, covered with lead, with the image of St. Paul on the top; but it was

pulled down by Sir Miles Partridge, Knight, in the reign of Henry VIII. The common speech then was, that he did set one hundred pounds upon a cast at dice against it, and so won the said Clochier and bells of the King; and then causing the bells to be broken as they hung the rest was pulled down.

Sir Miles subsequently lost his head on Tower Hill, for matter "concerning the Duke of Somerset," and Stow records the fact with a certain amount of complacency.

In the time of Richard the First the place had served a purpose, much as the Marble Arch does to-day, as a rallying-ground for Reformers of all kinds; and here did the craftsmen inveigh against the governing classes.

A Proclamation had been issued at Paul's Cross in the reign of Edward the Fourth, by Bishop Braybrooke, against barbers shaving on Sundays; forbidding the sale of merchandize in the Cathedral; and among other things against the playing of ball either within or without the Church, which had led to the breaking of the stained-glass windows.

Stow tells us that 'time out of mind it hath been a laudable custom on Good Friday in the afternoon' for 'some especial learned man' to preach a sermon at Paul's Cross dealing with the Passion.

"On the three Easter holidays, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, other learned men should preach in the forenoon at the Spital Cross on the Resurrection; and then on Low Sunday, one other learned man is to make rehearsal on those four former sermons, either commending or reproving them as to him is thought convenient." What would be thought, I wonder, if one cleric to-day was called upon to criticize publicly the sermons of his brother clerics?

The sermons of Archbishop Morton were pointed

in the most practical way. In 1487 he delivered a discourse on 'Cease to do evil, learn to do good'—the moral being, 'Vote liberal supplies to the King.' In 1489, when he wanted £100,000 for his Royal Master, he gave out his text, 'The eyes of the Lord are over all the Righteous'—which was a pleasing way of putting the matter.

During the closing years of the fifteenth century, it became the custom for penances to be performed at Paul's Cross. "Upon Passion Sunday (1497)," relates Fox, "one Hugh Glover bare a fagot before the Procession of Paul's and after with the fagot stood before the preacher all the sermon while at Paul's Cross." The fagot symbolized, of course, the death which the bearer had merited and escaped only through undergoing the penance.

The story of "James Baynham, Lawyer and Martyr," illustrates the fate of those who persisted in heresy. According to Fox, Sir Thomas More took a prominent part in the persecution of this unfortunate man. It is to be hoped that all he alleges against the author of *The Utopia* is not true; though it is to be feared that however misinformed he may be in details, there is sufficient circumstantial evidence in other directions to show More's attitude at times to have been hard and intolerant. After suffering torture in the Tower, Baynham abjured at Paul's Cross in the customary manner, but subsequently repented his weakness, and publicly confessed the same. He had stamped himself now as a heretic beyond recall; but, before his death, and in order to "save his soul," the authorities tortured him in various ways, and, failing to break his spirit, burned him at Smithfield, April 30.

Another case where penance was followed by death

is that of Elizabeth Barton, "The Holy Maid of Kent." She seems to have been a poor hysterical creature, whose ravings were utilized by others for sensational purposes. She was brought before the Star Chamber; but although she and her companions abjured at Paul's Cross, they were put to death—"hanged and headed," as Stow puts it.[1]

Penance was prescribed for matters other than heretical. In 1506 a priest did penance for having two wives—a double offence. And in the same year we hear that "a man did penance for transgressing Lent, holding two pigs ready drest, whereof one was upon his head, having brought them to sell." How far the man himself was significantly impressed by the ceremony, or the spectators edified, it is not related.

Ridley and Latimer, the influential preachers of Edward's reign, had large and attentive crowds to listen to them at Paul's Cross.

Ridley was the abler of the two; Latimer perhaps the more downright. He gave his first sermon on New Year's Day 1548. In his famous discourse—the Sermon of the Plough—he attacked all classes with a vigour and impartiality which was surprising and refreshing in an Age when 'liberty of speech' was so rarely practised and attended with such dangers.

Hardy as our ancestors were, even they found these rallyings at Paul's Cross no pleasurable matter. Latimer himself says in one of his sermons, "I do much marvel that London, being so rich a city, hath not a burying place without; for no doubt it is an unwhole-

[1] More looked upon the whole matter after penance as "a determined hypocrisy," previous to that he had been favourably impressed by the girl's good faith.

some thing to bury within the City, especially at such a time when there is great sickness—so that many die together. I think verily that many a man taketh his death in Paul's Churchyard; and this I speak of experience, for I myself when I have been there in some morning to hear the sermons, have felt such an ill-favoured unwholesome savour, that I was the worse for it a great while after. And I think no less but it be the occasion of much sickness and disease."

Latimer girded with great freedom and audacity at the lethargy of the clergy, and once in a sermon at Paul's Cross declared, "There is one that . . . is the most diligent prelate in all England. And will ye know who it is? I will tell you! It is the Devil! Among all the pack of them that have cure, the devil shall go for my money, for he appliest his business. Therefore, ye imprecating prelates, learn of the devil to be diligent in your office. If ye will not learn of God, for shame learn of the Devil."

Frequently also he reprimanded the King himself, and to the King's face. Henry received these homilies with good-humoured tolerance, and—went his own way again.

The name of John Colet naturally recalls the Oxford Reformers. The friend of Erasmus and More, he was one of the earliest of the Churchmen to preach Reform. As one of the Progressive clergy he, like More, preludes rather than belongs to the Reformation Movement. But he attacked the lethargy and loose living of the Clergy with as much vigour as did Latimer himself, nor did he hesitate to speak of the Pope as 'wickedly distilling poison to the destruction of the Church.' 'O Jesus Christ,' he exclaimed, 'wash for

us not our feet only, but also our hands and our *head*! Otherwise our disordered Church cannot be far from death.' Preaching to Convocation in 1511, he urged the clergy to reform themselves. But they neglected his exhortation, and Parliament shortly took the matter out of their hands.

Ridley, the Bishop of London, gave a long discourse in 1522 to a distinguished congregation, including "the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Craftsmen in their liveries." It is hard to know how to apportion the praise on this occasion—there being no details of the sermon—but credit attaches, it seems, both to the Preacher whose eloquence held his listeners for so long, and to the congregation that put up with the unpleasantness of the "unwholesome" churchyard.

The coming of Mary signified, of course, a change of theological dynasty. Dr. Bourne, her chaplain, savagely attacked the "dogs of the former reign," according to Strype, "and such an uproar began, such a shouting at the sermon, and casting up of caps, as that one who lived in those times and kept a journal of matters that then fell out, writ, '*It was as if the people were mad.*'"

Rogers and Bradford—two famous Protestants—tried to stem the uproar, and managed to get Bourne out of harm's way, not before a dagger thrown at him had stuck in the pulpit.

Crowds are proverbially fickle, however, and it must not be thought that it was a matter of doctrine with them. As to-day, the popularity of the preacher depends almost entirely upon some gift of personality. Gardiner, for instance, was extremely popular. "He preached," says Strype, "with much applause, before

an audience as great as ever was known" (1554). In the following reign Home, Jewel, Pierce, and Fletcher expressed the moderate Protestantism which characterized Elizabeth's policy.

The Queen was often present at Paul's Cross.

Finally, the Cross was pulled down by order of the Long Parliament—one of the earliest expressions of Puritan Policy.

The Catholics and Henry VIII.—Equally outspoken were the Catholic Priests.

A certain Father Peto (afterwards the famous Cardinal Peto), in May 1532, attacked Henry the Eighth in the most uncompromising manner. Preaching at Greenwich upon the story of Ahab and Naboth —when Henry and the Court were present—he pictured in lurid colours the fall of Ahab, and concluded by a direct appeal to the King: "And now, O King! hear what I say to thee. . . . This marriage is unlawful, because there are other preachers—yea, too many—which preach and persuade thee otherwise, feeding thy folly and frail affections upon hopes of their own worldly promotion; and by that means they betray thy soul, thy honour, and thy posterity; to obtain fat benefices, to become rich abbots and bishops, and I know not what. These I say are the four hundred prophets who, in the spirit of lying, seek to deceive thee. Take heed lest thou being seduced, find Ahab's punishment, who had his blood licked up by the dogs." The only reply made to this appeal was the sending down of another preacher—a Dr. Kirwan, to speak "on the other side" on the following Sunday. Kirwan attacked Peto in good round terms, and provoked one of his supporters to interrupt. Finally, Henry sum-

moned both Peto and the interrupter to be reprimanded. However, they stood to their guns manfully, and were banished.

Among the Protestant Martyrs, none excelled John Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, and Roger, Canon of St. Paul's, for the unflinching fortitude with which they met their fate.

Early in the Reformation movement, when greed was the order of the day, Hooper petitioned the Council for leave to assist the impoverished clergy out of his own purse. He invited the poor people of Gloucester, "by relays, to solid meat dinners," and with fine courtesy treated them as if they had been the highest in the land, dining with them. He was among the first to perish under Mary.

Hooper suffered at Gloucester, Roger at Smithfield. Roger, less of an orator than Hooper, had taken considerable share in the translation of the Bible along with Tyndal and Coverdale at Antwerp. He died, bathing his hands in the flame "as if it had been cold water."

At one time the fierceness of the Marian persecutions was attributed to the Catholic Bishops, but the latest results of historical research go to show that Gardiner, and Bonner, and Pole were by no means the cruel bigots popularly supposed. Politicians took the lead in the persecutions. Gardiner's activities preceded the "reign of terror," and during his ascendency no heretic was burned in England. Of Pole, even John Foxe admitted he was not of the 'cruel and bloody sort of Papists.' Bonner, who was certainly not gentle, like Pole, or fair like Gardiner, was reprimanded for his leniency in several cases.

During the last days of the massacre, when London

had sickened of bloodshed, and the attitude of the populace had swung round, men and women were driven in bands to the stake. Some were burned at Stratford-le-Bow; the majority at Smithfield. And the red glare of the martyr's stake lit up with lurid horror many a quiet country town.

The Clergy in Elizabeth's Reign.—Elizabeth was less tolerant of advice than her father had been. On the whole, he had allowed the clergy to storm at him to their heart's content—a circumstance which in no slight degree augmented his popularity. But the sensitiveness of Elizabeth has become proverbial. On one occasion, when the Bishop of London preached before her a sermon on the vanity of dress, the Queen remarked indignantly to the ladies that, "If the Bishop held more discourse on such matters she would soon fit him for heaven, but he should walk thither without a staff and leave his mantle behind him."

In the early years of Elizabeth's reign the moral and intellectual conditions of the Clergy were far from satisfactory. The noblest among the Protestants had perished at the stake: the Catholics—were not in authority. The new Clergy, as yet ill-educated, are represented as ignorant and riotous. If the clergy of the old Faith had fallen into evil ways; there is not much to be said in favour of these earlier Protestants. The charges against them are too uniform, too constant, to be dismissed as prejudiced, even while making allowances for exaggeration here and there.

The destruction of ancient forms and rites had led to a great deal of irreverence. Some churches were used for stabling horses. Pedlars plied their business

during Service times, and morris dancers lounged about in costume, "so as to be ready for the frolics which generally followed prayers."

Then again, some of the Catholics attended Services only to laugh and talk, and show their contempt generally for the New Religion.

The English Sunday, as we know it, is a Puritan institution. And in Elizabeth's reign the Puritan spirit was only beginning to assert itself. Sunday was a weekly holiday—a day for joke and jollity, for May games, dances, and picnics. And even after the Commonwealth a few of the old customs survived.

Cecil and the Reformation.—In reviewing the general trend of the Reformation movement one is struck by a divergence of policy in the treatment of religious disaffection.

Both Henry VIII. and Mary persecuted those who held opinions with which they did not agree. The opinion might or might not prove politically undesirable. It was wrong, and therefore to be extirpated. Especially was this the case with Mary, who was far more sincere and consistent in her religious beliefs than her father. "Burn the body and save the soul," said Mary.

Under Elizabeth, however, we are conscious of a change of attitude. If an opinion seemed politically undesirable — even if nothing had been done of a political character in connection with it, then the holder of this opinion must be extirpated. Should, however, the 'heresy' not bear upon political or social matters—then it might be left alone. Elizabeth could be cruel, 'an necessity demanded,' but she had no love of cruelty or of persecution; and the policy of her Minister Cecil, that of compromise, was entirely in accord with her own feelings.

His political policy met with remarkable success. In a time of great perplexity, and considerable danger, he so engineered the vessel of State as to keep her off all the perilous quicksands with which she was threatened. His name has come down to us as a veritable symbol of political sagacity. And yet his personality cannot assuredly be reckoned among those that kindle men's enthusiasm. He was certainly not an idealist like the unfortunate Somerset; nothing of the grace and subtle distinction that characterised More were his; nor had he the integrating force of such a man as Cromwell. He was not a man of great imagination or lofty purpose; and just as he lacked personal magnetism so he lacked those flashes of intuitive insight which mark out certain men as born leaders. But it is improbable that these limitations mattered in the least for the work he had to do, and the time in which he lived. It might well be indeed, that a greater, a finer character would have done far worse. If not generous and sympathetic, he was at any rate level-headed and fair-minded. By his sober calculations, distrust of emotional impulses, and intense practicability, he raised tact to a level with one of the fine Arts. His prudent common sense and love of law and order proved invaluable in dealing with ecclesiastical questions.

Delivering the Church from the two spiritual tyrants that were quarrelling for her soul—the one at Rome, the other at Geneva; he formulated a *viâ media* for the faithful, which, though unpleasing to zealots on both sides, proved to be well suited to the needs and requirement of the Nation.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LONDON OF SHAKESPEARE

Hey nonny no!
Men are fools that wish to die!
Is't not fine to dance and sing
When the bells of Death do ring?
Is't not fine to swim in wine,
And turn upon the toe,
And sing, Hey nonny no!
When the winds blow and the seas flow?
Hey nonny no!

An Elizabethan Lyric.

PERHAPS at no time in the history of London did the City present so attractive, so picturesque, so fascinating an aspect as in the Age of Shakespeare. It still retained the quaint charm of Chaucer's time, but the vitalizing influence of the Renascence had intensified its beauty, according it a larger and deeper life. The troublous influences of the Reformation had for the time being passed away; and although the memories of Smithfield saddened the hearts of many, yet the life of the people retained much of its pristine gaiety and heartiness, though mellowed by sad experiences. The careless irresponsibility of youth had passed, and the lusty years of young manhood arrived—a manhood that realized with a finer thrill than in the days gone by—

> The world—
> The beauty and the wonder and the power,
> The shapes of things, their colours, lights and shades,
> Changes, surprises.

The psychological legacy of the Renascence and Reformation Movement was this: a splendid access of self-confidence. Man believed in himself, trusted in his powers, dared the Fates, as he had never done before. In Shakespeare's time, just as in Chaucer's, the gay and jocund crowds stand out against the dark, mysterious background of the Unknown. Chaucer's 'privy thief' called Death, remains yet a gaunt, sinister figure. Shelley and Walt Whitman have presented us with a new view of Death—bereft of the old grisliness and chill desolation. Such a conception was as alien to the Tudor as to the Plantagenet mind. But in Shakespeare's day there is one difference. The helplessness of man in the hands of the inscrutable fates, which was strongly and constantly present to the mediæval mind, carries no longer the same appeal. Chaucer faced the tragic issues of Life with a kind of stoical reticence, as if to say: 'The less said of these things the better. Accept them we must, we can't help ourselves, why dwell on them?' This was not the way of Shakespeare, he faced them boldly, and although he had too tenacious a grasp of the concrete facts of life to cry 'Peace' where there was no peace, yet throughout his plays there breathes a sturdy self-reliance and sense of human responsibility.

I do not forget that in his most sombre tragedy, *King Lear*, Gloucester exclaims, 'As flies to wanton boys are we to the Gods; They kill us for their sport.' But this exclamation escapes the lips of a man in intense agony, and that attitude is not reflected throughout

the play. The prevalent attitude of the dramatist is more fairly represented by such lines as these :—

> Men at some time are masters of their fates :
> The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
> But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
> (*Julius Caesar*, Act i. Scene 2.)

> Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,
> Which we ascribe to heaven.
> (*Alls Well that Ends Well*, Act i. Scene 1.)

I do not mean to suggest that there is no fatalism in Shakespeare. That would be absurd. Shakespeare, in common with other great spirits who have faced fearlessly things as they are, is at times 'perplexed in the extreme' : and in any case he was too sane an observer not to realise, even in that age, the insignificance of man's efforts in dealing with the darker problems of life and destiny. All I would suggest is that the fatalism is qualified. It differs from the attitude of both the mediæval and modern mind. There is nothing in any of Shakespeare's tragedies to approach the pessimism of Mr. Thomas Hardy's 'Tess.' Shakespearean tragedy saddens without depressing.

And this self-confidence is the more remarkable when we consider the crudely superstitious character of the Age. Nor was this primitive imagining peculiar to the common people, though with them of course it was most manifest. The great Lord Bacon could refer to Copernicus as a " man who thinks nothing of introducing fiction of any kind into nature, provided his calculations turn out well " ; and he so far shared in the prevalent belief in charms that he maintained that precious stones 'may work by consent upon the spirits of men to comfort and exhilarate them.'

The medicine man of the day was no whit more

satisfactory than Chaucer's doctor of physic. Should you wish to be bled there was the barber-surgeon: should you desire a medicine, the apothecary could be consulted. But this gentleman "in tattered weeds with overwhelming brows" had little to offer besides love-philtres and charms. Should you wish to send an inconvenient acquaintance hastily to the "bourne from which no traveller returns," you might rely upon him with a measure of confidence; but if you were merely anxious to postpone your own visit there, the apothecary's treatment was less satisfying.

A special magic of healing attached to the dead: a draught of spring water from the skull of a murdered man; pills compounded from the skull of a man that had been hanged; the touch of a dead man's hand—in all of these much virtue was supposed to lie.

There were two famous physicians of Shakespeare's time: Dr. Andrew Boorde and Dr. Dee. Dr. Boorde insisted on the therapeutic value of washing your face only once a week, and wiping it with a scarlet cloth. Dr. Dee, the Mortlake astrologer, consulted the stars as to the best date for Elizabeth's coronation. She retained him always as her special physician, and made him Chancellor of St. Paul's. Like many of his Age he was an alchemist, and declared that his intercourse with "good" spirits in visions had shown him how to transmute gold from baser metals.

The mass of the people believed whole-heartedly in the existence of good and bad spirits. And the literature of the time exhales this belief to a remarkable extent. Preaching to Elizabeth in 1588, Bishop Jewel appealed to her to take extreme measures against witches and wizards.

It was in vain that Reginald Scott, in 1584, tried to stem the tide of current opinion in his *Discoverie of Witchcrafte*: men and women—particularly women—had only to evince some eccentricity of manner to be accounted guilty of witchcraft and forthwith to be burned. How far Shakespeare himself believed in these influences we do not know: what we do know is the impressive dramatic use he made of the spirit world in *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*: the apparition at Elsinore, the witches on the desolate heath, the ghostly visitor at the banquet. The last instance, where the vision (unlike the two others) is plainly subjective, not being perceived by Lady Macbeth or the other guests, tends to show that Shakespeare well appreciated the 'tricks' played by 'strong imagination.' But in other cases he frankly voices the popular belief in sorcery and witchcraft. Joan of Arc is depicted as a witch in *Henry VI.* Hamlet asks the ghost—

> Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
> Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell?

We hear of portents before the death of Julius Caesar—

> Ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets!

The disgusting potions supposed to be brewed by witches, and possessing magical qualities, are particularized by Shakespeare in the scenes with the witches.

We look upon *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* merely as charming fantasies; but the fairy world in the Wood near Athens, the Spirits that obey the behest of Prospero, were as real to many of Shakespeare's audience as Helena and Lysander, Miranda and Ferdinand. And I feel sure that it was not Prospero the philosophic recluse, but Prospero the Magician, who appealed primarily to the Elizabethans.

In short, Superstition was everywhere, and the London hostel no less than the wayside inn, the merchant's palace as well as the shepherd's hut resounded with tales of wonders, omens, and portents of 'presages and tongues of heaven.'

If London had appeared to the eyes of the country-bred Whittington as a Golden City; still more did it seem a place of rare and multifold charm to the countrymen of this time. From all parts of England men turned to London, dazzled by its pictorial splendour and material comforts. The poet Drayton is so delighted with its fleshly pleasaunces that his muse refuses to soar higher than the dinner table :—

> O more than mortal man that did this town begin,
> Whose knowledge formed the plot so fit to set it in,
> As in the fittest place by man that could be thought—
> To which by sea or land provisions could be brought.

The enterprising merchant, the scheming courtier, the man of letters, the ambitious politician—one and all turned to London and were caught up by her glamour.

Certainly she was pleasing enough to the eye both of the artist and the man of business. The latter saw in her black-fronted taverns, places where he could hire seamen for adventuring on the Spanish Main, his eye was taken with the big shops of King Street; and he coveted, mayhap, one of the spacious mansions with comfortable gardens which looked into the water south of the Strand. The artist would turn instinctively to the ancient walls, that flung their grey protecting arms around the city, and his gaze would roam over the undulating country flecked with quaint windmills to the north; or look with mingled horror and fascination at

the grim battlements of the Tower, dark with years, sinister with secrets; the symbol of despotic power and princely munificence.

The martial spirit would turn more readily to the grassy plains of Spitalfields, noted for its artillery exercise: to the marshy fields of Finsbury where practized the City archers; and he would interest himself in the royal hunting-ground, which afterwards became Hyde Park.

The Londoner of to-day would rub his eyes with surprise if suddenly placed in the midst of his familiar haunts. Piccadilly, a pretty country road, lush with flowers; Charing, a quiet hamlet; the Strand, with its picturesque houses and leisurely gardens; Southwark, a village, with its old 'Tabard Inn' and rustic surroundings. Suburban London had reached Whitechapel.

"Both sides of the street," said the chronicler, Stow—"bepestered with cottages and alleys, even up to Whitechapel Church, and almost half a mile beyond it, into the common fields: all which ought to be open and free for all men." From Temple Bar to Westminster the way was gorgeous with palaces and stately mansions. Westminster, of course, was a city in itself, with its Palace, its great Hall, its Almonry, its noble Abbey. But the traveller who struck up northwards, would find himself in open country where now curves Shaftesbury Avenue. And St. Pancras and King's Cross were well out of earshot of London: quiet, secluded, and rural.

When to all this we add the Thames, gay with silken-covered tiltboats, bearing chattering crowds of gallants and ladies—the Thames, with its swans and its

salmon and its bright clear waters, it is not hard to realise how picturesque was Shakespeare's London.

There is a wealth of material in the literature of the time for reconstructing a clear and distinctive picture. The plays of Shakespeare are, of course, rich in suggestion; Ben Jonson throws light on certain sides of life; and in the pages of William Harrison (household chaplain to Lord Cobham) and the annals of the chronicler Hall, in the *Survey* of Stow, and Stubbes' *Anatomie of Abuses*, to mention no other sources of information, we have a plenitude of descriptive detail and pungent comment.

Harrison's picture, as set forth in his well known *Description of England*, is especially remarkable: he is the Pepys of the Elizabethan Age, and though more of a moralist than the Restoration worthy, has the same gift of pleasant garrulousness.

"I have had an especiall eye unto the truth of things," says Harrison, and if occasionally shaky in his geography, and inclined, in common with others of his time, to be credulous, he is obviously sincere and fair minded.

Kingsley, I imagine, would have cordially approved his friendly attitude towards the working men of the day.

Both the artificers and the husbandmen are sufficiently liberal and very friendly at their tasks, and when they meet they are so merry without malice, and plain without inward Italian or French craft and subtlety, that it would do a man good to be in company among them.

There is quite a modern ring about this:—

I gather that the maintenance of a superfluous number of dealers in most trades, tillage always excepted, is one of the greatest causes why the prices of things become excessive.

No one could mistake the Elizabethan parson for one of Chaucer's worthies, or Langland's 'proud preestes.' There is the echo of the Reformation in Harrison's commendation of the decent apparel of the Protestant parsons compared with that of the Popish, who went either in divers colours like players, or in garments of light hues, as yellow, red, green, etc., with their shoes peaked, so that it was like beholding a "peacock that spreadeth his tail when he danseth before the hen."

In his chapter on gardens and orchards Harrison refers to tobacco, which apparently he knows of only as a medicine. "How do men extol the use of tobacco in my time, whereas in truth (whether the cause be in the repugnancy of our constitution unto the operation thereof, or that the ground doth alter her force, I cannot tell) it is not found of so great efficacy as they write." This leads him on to moralise about the Englishman's continual desire of "strange drugs," which make us wonder what Harrison would think of our Patent Medicines to-day.

The fashionable morning promenade in those days was in St. Paul's Cathedral. The middle of the nave was crowded with the beaux and belles of society, attired in the latest fashions, each vieing with the other in gorgeousness of attire. It was a place of business also. "After dinner," says Dekker, "every man as his business leads him, some to dice, some to drabs, some to plays, some to take up friends in the court, some to take up money in the city, some to lend testers in Paul's."

He thus depicts the fashionable side :—

If therefore you determine to enter into a new suit, warn your tailor to attend you in Paul's, who, with his hat in his

hand, shall like a spy discover the stuff, colour, and fashion of any doublet, or hose, that dare be seen there; and stepping behind a pillar to fill his table-books with those notes, will presently send you into the world an accomplished man.

Afterwards the gallant would wend his way to the apothecary's shop, where he could buy his tobacco. For the homelier sort of citizen there was the tavern; and the bookseller's shop attracted the scholar and the divine; where, Ben Jonson tells, 'he will sit a whole afternoon . . . reading the Greek, Italian, and Spanish.' The apprentices were regarded as servants always; they took charge of the ladies of the family whenever they went out, and in the evening followed them with a lantern and 'a stout cudgel.'

The merchant's house had been palatial in its magnificence for more than a century past, now it begins also to be marked by what we moderns would regard as comforts. We can gather from Harrison that all windows were provided with glass, that brick and stone buildings were replacing timber houses, that furniture had increased in 'richness' not only in the houses of the wealthy but in the houses of 'the inferior artificers,' who now 'garnish their cupboards with plate, their joined beds with tapestry and silk hangings, and their tables with carpets.' He speaks also of the 'multitude of chimneys lately erected,' also of 'the great (although not general) amendment of lodging; for our fathers, yea, and we ourselves also, have lain full oft upon straw pallets, or rough mats covered only with a sheet, and a good round log under our heads instead of a bolster or pillow.'

Carpets, though numerous, were seldom used for the floors, and it is said that the Presence Chamber of Elizabeth herself was strewn with hay.

Gremio, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, thus speaks about his furniture :—

> My house within the city
> Is richly furnished with plate and gold ;
> Basins and ewers to lave their dainty hands ;
> My hangings all of Tyrian tapestry ;
> In ivory coffers I have stuff'd my crowns ;
> In cypress chests my arras counterpoints,
> Costly apparel, tents, and canopies,
> Fine linen, Turkish cushions boss'd with pearl,
> Valance of Venice gold in needlework,
> Pewter and brass and all things that belong
> To house or housekeeping. . . .

Tobacco, if it first served as a medicine, very shortly takes its place among the indispensables of social life. It was the reign of the Pipe. Every one smoked pipes, from the ecclesiastic to the 'prentice. People are said to have gone to bed with pipe and tobacco on a table beside them, in case they might feel inclined for a whiff in the night ; and even children in schools substituted tobacco for breakfast, and were initiated into the trick of expelling the smoke through their nostrils by their masters. Of course, there were no matches in those days, and the smokers' equipment consisted of 'tobacco box, steel and touch.'

Food and Drink.—Beer and wine took the place of tea and coffee—then unknown beverages. French and Spanish wines were consumed in vast quantities. Ale rejoiced in a variety of names—'huffe cup,' 'mad dog,' 'angels' food.' Harrison is indignant at the excessive drinking, and speaks scornfully of the way "our malt bugs lug at this liquor even as pigs should lie in a row lugging at their dames teats, till they lie still againe, and be not able to wag . . . and . . . hale at huffe

cup till they be red as cocks and little wiser than their combs."

Another point of view—'pagan I regret to state,' as Mr. Pecksniff observed on a celebrated occasion—is presented in a stirring poem by one John Still, an Elizabethan Dramatist :—

THE EX-ALE-TATION OF ALE[1]

Back and side go bare, go bare,
Both foot and hand go cold;
But belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old!

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast,
And a crab laid in the fire;
A little bread shall do me stead,
Much bread I not desire;
No frost nor snow, no wind I trow,
Can hurt me if I would,
I am so wrapt and thoroughly lapt
Of jolly good ale and good.

Back and side go bare, go bare, etc.

And Tib, my wife, that as her life
Loveth well good ale to seak,
Full oft drinks she, till ye may see
The tears run down her cheek.
Then doth she trowl to me the bowl
Ever as a maltworm should;
And saith, 'Sweetheart, I have taken my part
Of this jolly good ale and old.'

Back and side go bare, go bare, etc.

And for the food he tells us :—

In number of dishes and change of meat the nobility of England (whose cooks are for the most part musical headed Frenchmen and Strangers) do most exceed, sith there is no day

[1] "Gammer Gurton's Needle," 1575. Quoted in *Lyrics from the Dramatists of the Elizabethan Stage*, by A. H. Bullen.

in manner that passeth over their heads whence they have not only beef, mutton, veal, lamb, kid, pork, coney, capon, pig, or so many of these as the season yieldeth, but also some portion of the red or fallow deer, besides great variety of fish and wild fowl, and thereto sundry other delicacies whereon the sweet hand of the seafaring Portugal is not wanting: so that for a man to dine with one of them, and to taste of every dish that standeth before him . . . is rather to yield unto a conspiracy with a great deal of meat for speedy suppression of natural health.

Harrison must have had a City dinner in mind.

The potato, of which he makes mention as 'beginning to have place,' is not the potato which we use as a vegetable to-day, but the Yam or sweet potato of Virginia, introduced by Sir Walter Raleigh. Our potato is supposed to be largely of artificial development. Rhubarb, at that time called 'Patience,' came from China about 1573. The development of the market garden was due to the Flemings, to whom we owe the carrot. Fruit was abundantly cultivated. In early Tudor times apples, plums, pears, and walnuts were plentiful, and Harrison mentions "strange fruit, as apricots, peaches, figs"; he is moreover uneasy, because, not content with ordinary fruit people "would adventure on dangerous and hurtful fruit, such as mushrooms."

The gentry used to dine at eleven and have supper about six. As for the poorest sort, remarks Harrison grimly, "they generally dine and sup when they may, so that to talk of their order of repast it were but a needless matter."

Forks were not in common use, but in the best houses the silver fork had been introduced. Says Ben Jonson:—

> Then you must learn the use
> And handling of your silver fork at meals.

And he apostrophizes the cook amusingly, thus :—

> A master cook ! why he's the man of men
> For a Professor ! he designs, he draws,
> He paints, he carves, he builds, he fortifies,
> Makes citadels of curious fowl and fish :
> Some he dry-ditches, some moats round with broths :
> Mounts marrow bones ; cuts fifty-angled custards ;
> Rears bulwark pies, and, for his outer works,
> He raiseth ramparts of immortal crusts.

The Dress of the Day.—One consequence of the increased wealth of the country is seen in the dress, not only of the Court and the nobles, but of the middle class.

The plenitude and the variety of social life afford many opportunities for display, and both men and women availed themselves of it.

Here again Harrison, quite in the vein of *Sartor Resartus*, moralizes : "Oh, how much cost is bestowed nowadays upon our bodies and how little upon our souls : how many suits of apparel hath the one and how little furniture the other."

Portia's remarks upon one of her lovers hit off happily the fashion of the day : "He is a proper man's picture, but alas, who can converse with a dumb show? How oddly he is suited ; I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere."

False hair was greatly in request ; and a curious and ghastly touch is given to a contemporary account of Mary Stuart's death by the description of how the beautiful, glossy tresses fell away, disclosing short grey hair, as 'one of three score and ten years old.'

I do not know that the Elizabethan lady was more artificial than many society women to-day. She has

been taken to task severely—one cannot say unfairly—for her gorgeous apparel, her innumerable costumes, her dyes, her perfumes, her 'magic' for preserving the complexion; but after all, are not these things to be found in Bond Street and Regent Street to-day? Stiffly starched ruffs (starch was introduced about this time) and jewel-embroidered stomachers are no longer popular; but that is merely by a freak of fashion.

The difference in costume is best seen by comparing the modern nobleman or city man with the Elizabethan gentleman.

"Men," declared Harrison roundly, "are transformed into monsters. Some lusty courtiers and gentlemen of courage do wear either rings of gold, stones, or pearl in their ears, whereby they imagine the workmanship of God to be no little amended. But (he concludes) they rather disgrace than adorn their persons, as by their niceness in apparel, for which I say most nations not unjustly deride us, also for that we do seem to imitate all nations round about us, wherein we be like to the polypus or chameleon." Ribbons and roses adorned the locks of the exquisites; the waists were pinched in; the hands artificially whitened; mirrors peeped from their girdles; high-heeled boots improved the stature; whilst the hair was treated in the most fantastic ways.

Sir Walter Besant gives a picturesque description of an Elizabethan wedding. From fifteen to seventeen was considered a suitable marrying age in those times. Some married at fifteen; and 'an unmarried girl of twenty was regarded as an old maid.' Here is the ritual as described by Besant[1]:—

The betrothal took place forty days before the wedding. . . . To make the betrothal binding there were four points

[1] *London in the Time of the Tudors*, by Walter Besant, p. 312.

to be observed: (1) The joining of Hands; (2) The exchange of Kisses; (3) The exchange of Rings; (4) The testimony of Witnesses. After the betrothal the wedding. . . . The wedding customs were very pretty. The bride, like all unmarried women, wore a dress which exposed a portion of her bosom—you may see how by looking at any portrait of Queen Elizabeth. She wore her hair flowing. . . . On the way to and from the church, wheat was thrown on the head of the bride, just as rice is thrown now, as a symbol of fruitfulness to follow. The wedding guests wore scarves, gloves, and favours. Cake—the bridecake—was taken to the church and distributed after the ceremony; brooches were also given to the young men and maidens present. Then the cup of wine was sent round—the "Knitting" cup or the "Contracting" cup; and then, carrying in her hand a piece of gilt rosemary, the bride led the way home, where for three days festivities, masques, mumming, music, dancing, feasting, and drinking were carried on. In some of the churches special pews were provided for newly-married couples, who sat in them and listened, while the preacher discoursed on "The Bride's Bush" or "The Wedding Garment Beautified."

The mountebank has been always with us, though for the last hundred years writers have been gravely lamenting his decease. To-day he confines his attention practically to rustic audiences; the Londoner is too much for him; but in the forties of the last century one of the tribe startled the street with a confident cry concerning a medicine that was "very good against an earthquake." The *Spectator* has given posthumous glory to a gentleman in Hammersmith, who sold five-and-sixpenny medicine (so he said) for sixpence, because he wished to give every one of his audience five shillings gratis. The grateful crowd responded handsomely to this professor of cheap cunning.

The arch-mountebank, however, belongs to Tudor times. His name was Dr. Andrew Boorde—already

mentioned—"an ingenious man who would frequent markets and fairs where a conflux of people used to get together, to whom he prescribed. He would make humorous speeches, couched in such language as caused mirth, and wonderfully propagated his fame." Hence the term "Merry Andrew," as applied to his imitators.

Shakespeare and the Drama.—There are seven years in the life of Shakespeare for which we are compelled to rely entirely on tradition, and those were the first years which he spent in London. It is probable that he left his birthplace about 1587 to try his fortune, as many others were doing, in the great City. Upon one point these traditions are agreed. It was a time of struggle, of 'mean employments.'

The Elizabethan used to ride to the play on horseback, and James Burbage, father of the noted actor, kept a livery stables in Smithfield. There is a tradition that young Shakespeare took charge of the horses whilst the gentry were enjoying themselves in the playhouse, and that this employment proved so profitable that he would hire underlings to assist him—"Shakespeare's boys."

The theatre looms so largely in the history of the Time that no excuse is necessary for sketching briefly its early beginnings.

The Drama was born under the shadow of the mediæval Church. Miracle Plays or Mysteries had in the Middle Ages been given by ecclesiastics in their churches. In this way the Church could appeal effectively to the imagination of the people, and with far greater effect often than by her ritual or her preachers. To illiterate folk there is no profounder appeal than the spectacular appeal. And the Mysteries did good service for the Church.

But such an admirable method of reaching the hearts of the people was not likely to remain the peculiar property of the Church. The Egyptians did in like manner with their enchantments; in other words, the Trade Guilds found that it was an effective means of kindling patriotic and municipal enthusiasm; and 'Mysteries' unconnected with Scripture were introduced into the Pageants of the time.

But the mediæval method of presenting the Mystery by means of characters personifying abstract qualities lingered on for a considerable while.

A change comes in 1548, when historical personages are introduced into the 'Morality,' and we get something like an historical drama. More important was the influence of John Heywood (1565), who devised interludes which dealt with real people.

Comedy, therefore, precedes Tragedy in the history of the English Drama. And there was, as we know, no great demand at any time for Tragedy.[1] The prosperity of later Elizabethan times greatly stimulated the drama. Every nobleman of wealth was anxious to include an amusing entertainment in the programme of hospitality submitted to his friends. And in addition to Interludes there were Masks and Revels, which approximate roughly to our modern comic operas and musical comedies.

A good example of an Interlude is the famous one performed by Bottom and his friends for the benefit of Theseus and his. It affords us, moreover, a humorous illustration of the simplicity of the old 'properties.'

Moonshine. This lantern doth the horned moon present;
Myself the man in the Moon do seem to be.

[1] The first genuine English tragedy, *Gorboduc*, was given in 1561 at the Christmas Revels of Lincoln's Inn. In 1562 it was played before Elizabeth at Whitehall. The names of Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton are associated with it.

The company, moreover, 'hard-handed men,' who had 'never laboured in their minds till now,' were meant clearly to ridicule the old Guild players, who would be craftsmen, and frequently as crude in their performances as Pyramus, Thisbe, and Co.

The Masks varied in quality. The best type is well represented by Milton's *Comus*.

Revels were less elaborate than Masks, and could often be introduced into the ordinary drama. In *The Tempest*, for instance, Shakespeare introduces Revels which, by the cunning of the dramatist, are called into being by the Magic of Prospero.

But the Drama flourished for a considerable while before the theatre: Council chambers, Guild halls, the yards of Inns, these were the theatres of the early Elizabethans.

The Queen had her Company of Players, and most of the noblemen theirs.

In 1587 the Queen's players, Burbage's Company, visited Stratford-on-Avon, so the tradition that connects Shakespeare with Burbage is founded in reason. Who knows what dreams and aspirations may have come to the future dramatist when Burbage's Company set his peaceful little village aglow with excitement?

The first regular theatre was built at Blackfriars by James Burbage in 1576; this was a private theatre. Afterwards came public theatres—the Curtain, in Shoreditch, 1576; the Globe, in Southwark, the famous "Wooden O," 1594; the Fortune, in Shoreditch, 1599. Performances took place daily in the early afternoon, and lasted for about a couple of hours. Shakespeare's plays were given only at Burbage's theatre and at the Globe.

These early theatres were primitive concerns, large wooden sheds, partly thatched with rushes, a flagstaff on the roof, and surrounded by a trench. They clustered round the swampy ground beside the Thames, and gave rise to a good deal of vexation to quiet citizens in the neighbourhood. For around these playhouses in the afternoons the narrow, tortuous streets were so crowded by a noisy, frivolous concourse that "business suffered in the shops, processions and funerals were obstructed, and perpetual causes of complaint arose."

Despite objections by the residents, and bitter criticism by the Puritans, now beginning to be a force in the social life, theatres multiplied rapidly, and we gather from the *Histrio-Mastix* of Prynne that in 1633 there were nineteen permanent theatres in London, which for a town of 300,000 inhabitants sufficiently indicates the intense interest taken in the drama.

The difference between the private and public theatres did not lie, as might be imagined, in the fact that admission was by invitation in the one, by payment in the other, but in the construction. The private theatres were designed on the model of the Guild halls; the public theatres on those of the Inn Yard. The private theatres were the more luxurious, being fully roofed and seated. In the public theatres, on the other hand, the auditorium, as in Ancient Greece, was open to the sky, only the stage being roofed. Thus the pleasure of sight-seeing was of a doubtful kind in bad weather.

Close to the Globe Theatre was the famous Bear Garden, and the propinquity of the illustrious bear seekers was sufficiently evident to the noses of the audience.

There were no tickets. A penny (about fivepence in

our money) admitted to standing room in the yard. Rich spectators watched the performance from boxes on each side of the stage, paying about twelve shillings in modern reckoning for the privilege of a seat. In the upper proscenium box were the orchestra of the Globe, the largest in London, composed of ten performers, with drum and trumpets for the martial scenes, oboes and flutes to suggest sentimental passages.

The fashionable part of the house was on the stage itself. There sat the royal patrons of the theatre, Essex and Southampton, with their friends. Failing seats, these gentlemen sprawled upon the rush-strewn boards, over which they spread their rich cloaks. Here also sat the dramatic poets of the time, to whom were accorded a free pass. Most important of all to us were the shorthand writers, commissioned by piratical booksellers, who took down the dialogue, under pretence of criticizing it, and thus preserved for posterity many plays that otherwise would have been lost.

If we complain to-day of Society people who chatter in the stalls and boxes and annoy the players, what would have been thought of the ceaseless hum of conversation between the fashionables on the stage, interspersed with calls for drinks and lights for their pipes? For smoking went on, as in our music halls, throughout the performance.

No very strenuous objection, however, seems to have been raised either by the actors or the audience. They accepted the interruption just as they accepted the primitive scenery, as in no way disturbing the theatrical illusion.

Certainly a great deal was left to the imagination of the spectator, which was not so disastrous a thing as many may think in an Age when scarcely anything is

left to the imagination. The giving of a tragedy was signalized by draping the stage with black; for a comedy, blue hangings were substituted. A placard hung upon one of the stage doors bore the legend of Venice or Verona, as the case might be; no other indication was there of the *mise-en-scene*. In the battle scenes an entire army scurried in and out through a single door. One can understand the apology of the Prologue in *Henry V.*:—

> Pardon, gentles all,
> The flat unraised spirits that have dared
> On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth
> So great an object: can this cockpit hold
> The vasty fields of France? or may we cram
> Within this wooden O the very casques
> That did affright the air at Agincourt?

No women ever appeared on the stage, and very few attended the theatre at all. It was far too rough a place. The Queen summoned the Players to Court on special festivals—Twelfth Night, and so on; and Shakespeare's Company often gave a "Command" performance. Hence in some of the plays, notably *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Merchant of Venice*, flattering allusions are made for the benefit of the Queen. Dr. Furnival was the first to point out the compliment to Elizabeth's oratory in *The Merchant of Venice*.

The actor of Shakespeare's day was frankly satisfied with popular approval, no matter how obtained. One Will Kemp, a celebrated comedian, and one of Shakespeare's players, danced the whole way from London to Norwich, and we are told took "sixpennies and groats amidst hearty prayers and God-speeds." He was a

clever Morris dancer, and chose the first Monday in Lent for his promising performance, being attended by Thomas Sly, his taborer, and William Bee, his servant, and George Sprat as a kind of referee. Then he began "frolickly to foot it." He was attended by an admiring and attentive crowd, whom, however, he found, as do the runners of to-day, over solicitous.

A favourite street amusement of the time was the motion or puppet show, which offered burlesques of classical stories, and Ben Jonson speaks well of their humour. In a later Age the motion was a favourite with the 'quality,' no less than with the mob. To-day few survivals remain of the puppet show,—the famous Punch and Judy being the most noteworthy ; but it is seldom to be seen in the London streets, though it still holds its own tolerably at some seaside places.

The fact that Shakespeare was an actor as well as a writer contributed to the rapidity of his rise to affluence. At an early date it is probable that he became a share-holder in the theatre. Tradition has it that he played the Ghost in *Hamlet*, and Old Adam in *As You Like It*, also Old Knowell in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, and his own *Henry IV.* at Court. His capacity for work must have been tremendous. What with rehearsing his own plays, reading the plays of others, often revising them, acting in the afternoons, and carousing at the famous Mermaid in the evenings, one marvels how he managed to write so much and so finely. And yet had he lived less in the world, and been more a man of his study, his plays would not have been so rich in actuality, so amazingly diverse in characterization.

The English Historical Plays are especially useful

from our point of view in picturing for us the London of Shakespeare's day. For in these Plays dealing with Plantagenet and early Tudor times Shakespeare paints London Life not as it existed then, but as it existed when he himself was writing. The famous Boar's Head in *Henry IV.* is an anachronism, but that after all matters little. What does matter is that the tavern in the East Chepe of Elizabeth's day is immortalized for us. From the standpoint of strict historical criticism there is no doubt that many of the royal personages figuring in these plays are drawn from untrustworthy sources, and are manipulated often for the purposes of effective dramatic contrast, and the modern historian has grieved greatly over their inaccuracy. But the plays are not dependent upon their crowned heads for their vitality, and we would gladly sacrifice their Majesties if needs be, from King John till Henry VIII., for one touch of glorious Falstaff. As a matter of fact, however, I believe that the case against the Kings has been exaggerated, and that in their main outlines John, Richard II. and III. will satisfy the best recent historical investigations.

References to contemporary sights and events are so multifarious that a brief selection only can be given.

This from *Henry VI.*, alluding to the roses in the Temple Gardens :—

> *Suffolk.* Within the Temple Hall we were too loud—
> The garden here is more convenient.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> *Warwick.* And here I prophesy; this brawl to-day,
> Grown to this faction in the Temple Garden,
> Shall send between the red rose and the white
> A thousand souls to death and deadly night.

The Play of *Richard III.* contains references to

Crosby Place—the dramatist himself lived hard by—and to Baynard's Castle. Crosby Place has been described in a previous chapter. Shakespeare's patron, the Earl of Pembroke, lived at Baynard's Castle. The history of the Castle dates back to the time of the Conqueror. Shakespeare is historically accurate in choosing the Castle as the scene of Richard's persuasion to accept the Crown.

In Shakespeare's day there was a fine garden belonging to the Bishop of Ely, about forty acres in extent, which covered the site now occupied by Ely Place and Hatton Garden. This explains the allusion :—

Gloucester. When I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there,
I do beseech you send for some of them.

The Tower, the old Savoy Palace, and Westminster Hall are pictured in *Richard II.* The Play of *Henry VIII.* revolves largely round Whitehall and Blackfriars.

The London Gardens were rich in flowers and fruits; this we know from other sources, and Shakespeare's allusions to Nature owe doubtless as much to his knowledge of London as to the countryside of Stratford. The frank and deep delight in Nature which had marked, we may be sure, his youth at Stratford, could find almost as full an outlet in the London of his day as in Warwickshire. Mr. Ordish is certainly right in emphasizing the point that "the life of the Elizabethan Londoner was largely an outdoor one, and that the Nature pictures and allusions so richly scattered up and down the Plays struck familiarly upon chords of memory and association in an Elizabethan playhouse."

Daffodils grew in plenitude in the gardens; no need

to wander 'lonely as a cloud' to light on them, for their 'jocund company' was as familiar as the gay crowds in the streets, and Shakespeare did but transfigure a common sight with poetic beauty when he made Perdita exclaim :—

> . . . Daffodils,
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The Winds of March with beauty.

But when Shakespeare wanders to other countries, so skilful is he in suggesting the Italian temperament, that there is nothing distinctively English about Portia, Juliet, Iago, or Othello, for example. They are unmistakably creatures of the warm South. Yet the backgrounds of the Plays have equally unmistakable touches of London Life.

The humours of the Watch in *Much Ado about Nothing* are frankly Elizabethan; and we dare wager that Dogberry never set foot outside England in his life. His type existed all over the country in the vain, good-natured, weak-headed, timid constable. A letter of Lord Burleigh bears out the truthfulness of Shakespeare's delineation. *Twelfth Night* teems with allusions to London customs and ways. The play was produced at Blackfriars, and there are allusions to the Puritans who favoured that locality; to the churches in the neighbourhood; to bear-baiting, to the ale-houses, and to masques and revels. Illyria must have resembled London most uncommonly!

Blackfriars does not suggest opulence to the modern Londoner, but in Shakespeare's day it was an aristocratic quarter, and the abode of many noblemen. Shakespeare lived near the theatre, close, as we have seen, to his patron.

But a place associated as much with Shakespeare as Blackfriars is the famous "Mermaid Tavern" in Bread Street.

The Tavern

The Tavern played an important part in London Life. It is, says Earle, "The busie man's recreation, the idle man's businesse, the melancholy man's sanctuary, the stranger's welcome, the Innes a Court man's entertainment, the scholar's kindlinesse and the citizen's curtesie. It is the studie of sparkling wits and a cup of Canary their booke where we leave them."

The concourse at "The Mermaid" had been largely brought together by Sir Walter Raleigh. The kindred souls who met there constituted a kind of Club in days when Clubland was not thought of. Truly a noble gallery, that included Shakespeare, Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Selden, Carew, Donne, and many others of note. No more convivial spirit amongst them than Jonson, whose 'particular vanity' was 'a pure cup of rich canary wine,' of which he says, 'we will sup free but moderately.' A pious aspiration which at times, perhaps, remained a pious aspiration.

Fuller's description of the two great poets is well known, but it bears repetition :—

> Many were the wit combats between him (Shakespeare) and Ben Jonson, which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon, and an English man of war. Master Jonson (like the former) was built far higher in learning; solid but slow in his performances. Shakespeare, with the English man of war, lesser in bulk but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.

In this Age, society could be divided broadly into

two main divisions — the Gentry and the Citizens. Country Squires came up at certain seasons when suits were heard at Westminster, to get their disputes settled, and sometimes spent what was intended for legal business on the pleasures of the Town. Jonson terms them 'Country Gulls,' and suggests rules for making a town gallant out of a country clown. "'Twere good you turned four or five acres of your best land into two or three trunks of apparel—you may do it without going to a conjuror . . . learn to play at primero and passage, and even (when you lose) have two or three peculiar oaths to Swear by that no man else swears; . . . when you come to play be humorous, look with a good starched face, and ruffle your brow like a new boot, laugh at nothing but your own jests, or else as the noblemen laugh . . . and even when you are to dine or sup in any strange presence, hire a fellow with a great chain (though it be copper its no matter), to bring your letters feigned from such a nobleman, or such a knight, or such a lady."

Bob Sawyer would have rejoiced at the last suggestion: it is worthy to rank with his Church strategy.

Jonson's plays are less reliable than Shakespeare's for picturing the life of the day. He treats of men and things as a satirist rather than as an artist, and although some of his scenes, for instance the scenes at the Mitre in *Every Man out of his Humour*, supplement Shakespeare's London pictures, we do not find the same fine artistic detachment, and splendid tolerance that we find in the 'English Man of War.'

Shakespeare's attitude towards the Life of his Day.— And this leads one to a point which has occasioned a

great deal of criticism lately, but upon which, interesting as it is, I can but touch briefly here.

A school of critics has arisen, including such men as Tolstoy, Bernard Shaw, and Ernest Crosby, who, having weighed Shakespeare in the balance of sociology, finds him grievously wanting. I have no intention of dealing with Tolstoy's attack on Shakespeare's artistry, or of Mr. Bernard Shaw's indictment concerning the "emptiness of Shakespeare's philosophy, the superficiality and second-handness of his morality, to his weakness and incoherence as a thinker," etc. These things cannot be discussed at the end of a chapter, and to deal with them fairly would be to trench on matters manifestly outside the scope of this book. Lamb humorously referred to his friend Coleridge's metaphysics as 'only his fun'; perhaps Mr. Shaw's friends will deal with a good deal of his criticism in a like spirit.

However that may be, there are one or two matters in their sociological criticism which concern us here. Shakespeare is accused of caring nothing for the working people; caring only to please his patrons and to flatter the Court. "A snob," says Mr. Shaw; while to Mr. Crosby *Coriolanus* is a "mine of insults" to the poor. Even that Shakespearean enthusiast, Dr. Furnival, admits "Shakespeare used the poor rather as material for fun to amuse his richer patrons with, than as folk with whom he felt. He doesn't show much sympathy with them—not so much as Chaucer, I think—but his representations of them are all in good part, and like those of Chaucer and Dickens, make his hearers think kindly of the men they laugh at."

Now in Shakespeare's pictures of London, it is quite true that he makes his principal characters, when

not Kings and Queens, at any rate of noble birth. Shakespearean tragedy deals entirely with dire misfortune happening to a man highly placed: other types of tragedy do not concern him. But I do not find in this fact an illustration of Shakespeare's aristocratic insolence. What it does seem to me to show is this—Shakespeare writes as a Tudor, not as a Victorian or an Edwardian. In those times Kings and Queens did play a very prominent part in the pageant of History. Henry VIII.'s vices, no less than his virtues, were matters of international importance. A proper understanding of Elizabeth's character—her shrewdness, her opportunism, her vanity, her sense of the theatre, her meanness, her undoubted goodness of heart—supplies a theory to the history of the reign, to its few failures, to its many successes. And with the best in literature, art, and science, the aristocrats of the Age are indissolubly connected.

The people in the mass were grossly ignorant and brutal. The Middle Class were only beginning to find themselves: not for another hundred years would they show their real worth. And the poorer classes, with no mind or will of their own, were objects of pity and compassion rather than of admiration. However, if it could be proved that Shakespeare despised them and regarded them merely as butts for his ridicule, the case against him would be sufficiently strong. But can it? I can only see in his pictures the fine impartiality of the true artist. Surely virtues and vices are fairly evenly distributed between rich and poor in his plays. If the credulity and weakness of the mob are faithfully portrayed in *Coriolanus*; so also is the selfishness and megalomania of the man himself. The hero of *Julius Caesar* is not Caesar, but the Republican

Brutus, and here again the strength and weakness of the man are wonderfully brought out. Perdita, with a rustic upbringing, is charming; Leontes is coarse and ignoble. Imogen is fine souled; Cymbeline the King weak and petty. *Lear* deals with Kings, Princes and Princesses and Nobles—but, with the exception of Cordelia, in what terrible colours are they painted! Where is the aristocratic insolence in the relentless pictures of the Princesses Goneril and Regan; in the weakness and vanity of the old king? Besides Cordelia, can we recall any gracious, attractive human figure? Yes, that of the Fool! Was he of noble birth?

Is Shakespeare's indifference to the poor shown in the adjuration of Lear?—

> Take physic, pomp;
> Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
> That thou may'st shake the superflux to them
> And show the heavens more just.

Or take a Comedy, *As You Like It*, and note how admirably the rustic spirits hold their own with the aristocrats.

Shakespeare no more spurned the poorer classes than he spurned the middle classes. It were quite as easy to make out a case from *The Merry Wives of Windsor* showing how meanly he thought of the burgher class, or from *Macbeth* and *Othello* to show how meanly he thought of soldiers, as to see in *Coriolanus* "a mine of insults to the people"!

The fact of the matter is, that the superb objectivity of Shakespeare makes it quite easy for any one to prove a 'case' by selecting certain passages. You can prove anything from Shakespeare, just as you can prove any doctrine from the Bible. Apologists from time to time have proved to their own satisfaction that he was a

Catholic and a Protestant, a lover of tyranny, a lover of liberty, and other irreconcilable positions.

We live in an age when many of our men of letters have had distinctive philosophies of life, and we are irritated because Shakespeare has none. And so some of us try to impose a philosophy upon him. It is useless. Character and temperament are no doubt revealed in his work : the most objective writer cannot help revealing himself in his work. But for that revelation you have to take the whole of the work, and in doing so you will find it impossible to pin Shakespeare to any one point of view.

> Others abide our question—Thou art free !
> We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still.

I should not care to say even that he showed less sympathy with the poor than did Chaucer. If he dwells more upon their weaknesses and defects, may it not be because, irrespective of class, he is more sensitive to the frailties of men than Chaucer ? and he is equally sensitive to the 'soul of goodness' in most. With Chaucer, if you do not descend to Hell you do not, on the other hand, ascend to Heaven ; you never get that assurance of the splendid potentialities of human nature which you find in Shakespeare's writings.

Of course he had his weaknesses : he was a man, not a god. But the marvel of the man is that, typifying as he does the greatness and the defects of his Age and Generation, he should so far transcend his time as to speak to us to-day—at any rate to those of us who have ears to hear, despite our changes of thought and shifting of ideals—with an even greater compelling power than in his day and generation.

CHAPTER IX

THE LONDON OF MILTON AND CROMWELL

"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace."—THE FAVOURITE QUOTATION OF LADY CROMWELL.

I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs.—MILTON.

THE profound influence of the Bible upon the Literature of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries cannot well be overestimated. The massive eloquence of Milton, the fine simplicity of Bunyan, the fierce directness of Swift, the turbulent 'prophesyings' of Carlyle, the measured invective of Ruskin—how clearly and unmistakably do they reflect their Judaistic inspiration. No less remarkable in the seventeenth century was the influence of the Bible upon political and social life. The Scriptures, hitherto reserved for the select few, are now spread broadcast for men and women to consider and expound for themselves. The Bible is to be seen everywhere, heard of everywhere; it points an argument in the House of Commons; inspires the soldier on the field of battle; leavens the official despatches; the barber quotes it to his customer; the Puritan critic cites it against his enemies; and even those who foregathered at the tavern intersperse the news of the day with discussion of doctrines.

Externally, London preserved much the same aspect until the time of the Great Fire as it had done in the

time of Shakespeare. Many aspects of its social life remained unchanged throughout Stuart times. What changes there were may be attributed to the growth of Puritanism, and Puritanism was nurtured upon the Bible. The lusty self-confidence of the Elizabethan Age merges into the proud self-reliance of the Stuart period. The peace and prosperity of Elizabeth's later years had revived in the Londoner that spirit of independence which, for a while, he had been content to forego while his country was in danger from the Catholic foe.

It is not a question whether James and Charles were more or less despotic than their predecessors. The tragedy of the Stuarts lies in the fact that they were despotic at a wrong time. When James entered London in such triumph, tyranny was already an anachronism. No King could have desired a better reception than James the First received from the City, and yet no sooner does he attempt autocracy than he suffers a rebuff.

A story is told that, not being able to obtain a loan which he had demanded, James, with characteristically foolish violence, exclaimed that he would "remove his own Court with all the records of the Tower, and the Courts of Westminster Hall, to another place." In reply the Lord Mayor quietly observed: "Your Majesty hath power to do what you please, and your City of London will obey accordingly: but she humbly desires that when your Majesty shall remove your Courts, you would please to leave the Thames behind you."

Small wonder that the King tried to bolster up a clearly limited authority by an extravagant theory of 'Divine Right.' Faith in an institution is always in danger when its credentials are flourished in one's face.

The term 'Puritan' usually calls up the picture of an austere figure, garbed in black, and with lank hair—a man with no feeling for Art, no sympathy with the graces and amenities of life,—a sour, crabbed, and gloomy personage.

That such Puritans existed is quite true; that such a picture is an absurd travesty of the best type of Puritan is equally true. Unfortunately, Puritanism has been associated in the popular mind with the extravagances of extremists. This, no doubt, is partly due to the fact that the Stage, which the Puritan never regarded with favour, has revenged itself by perpetuating a caricature whenever it dealt with Puritanism. Even our own generation has witnessed Sir Henry Irving in a play where every artifice is used to idealize the portrait of Charles and to belittle the portrait of Cromwell.

In literature, not till Carlyle wrote his famous History did any adequate picture exist of the great political Puritan. And Macaulay was only expressing wittily the thought of his time when he wrote of the Puritan, that he disliked bear-baiting not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectator.

Any one who wished to 'purify' the usages of the Church was called a Puritan, and it is a mistake to associate the term entirely with Nonconformity. Many, of course, found it better to worship separately, as they could not get their forms sufficiently purified; but others were content to pursue the work of purification from within the Church. Puritanism had its Mores as well as its Luthers.

Ineffectual as Monasticism had proved in its de-

clining years, it had supplied an ideal which the serious and devout sorely missed now that it had been uprooted. To such—largely men of intense if narrow imaginations, moral fervour, and tenacity of purpose—Puritanism supplied the necessary inspiration. They seized upon its principles with eager enthusiasm, and found in it the wherewithal to combat the shallow and light-hearted.

The Artist owes Puritanism a grudge for the ruthless destruction of so much that was beautiful in the art treasures of London. But the extremist is to be blamed largely for this. The finer type of Puritan was by no means insensible either to the beauty of Art or to the innocent joys of life. Milton wrote masques; Colonel Hutchison was an expert dancer; Cromwell delighted in music and encouraged musicians. In fact, the representative Puritan was by no means the dull dog he is painted, and Cromwell had less in common with some of the violent sectaries of his day than with some of the finer spirits among the Royalists.

The prevalence of superstition, so marked a characteristic of Shakespeare's Age, continued throughout Stuart times. Francis Bacon, it is true, struck upon an idea which was to revolutionize the scientific thought of the future—the idea that the first thing to be done in science was to engage in the systematic and wide examination of facts. But if he may be called the parent of modern science, it must be added that the parent had little affinity with his children save the act of begetting them. And this is clearly seen, not merely in the unscientific character of the Age he lived in, but in the unscientific character of many of his own methods.

Cowley has compared him with Moses on Pisgah

surveying the Promised Land, but not entering into possession. Newton was the Joshua of Science. He seized upon what the other had only seen at a distance. It is fair to remember, however, that Bacon himself admitted "I only sound the clarion, but I enter not into the battle."

As Protestantism failed in its dream of a universal Church, the Puritan mood became sterner. In London the multitudinous activities which had been called into being during the Elizabethan Age were directed into new channels.

Many years before the execution of Charles I., and the acknowledged victory of the Parliamentary forces, the strength of Puritan sentiment had made itself felt in London. As early as 1618, James I. was moved to issue his famous *Book of Sports*. This was directed against certain "Puritans and precise people" who had interfered with the just pleasures of the people by prohibiting such "lawful recreations and honest exercises upon Sundays and other holidays after the afternoon sermon or service" as the peasantry had been accustomed to. James' proclamation continued: "Our pleasure likewise is, that after the end of divine service our good people may not be disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreation such as dancing, either men or women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreation, nor from having of May games, Whitsun ales and Morris dances, and the setting up of May poles."

The *Book of Sports* was duly circulated in London. Whatever may have been King James' expectation, the proclamation was by no means well received. Many incumbents of City churches refused to read it publicly.

Twenty-five years later it was proved that their understanding of the popular sentiment was sounder than that of their monarch. On May 10, 1643, the *Book of Sports* was solemnly burned by the common hangman in Cheapside. Puritanism had conquered at last.

Drunkenness and licentiousness—those cardinal weaknesses of an Age that had grown to know the meaning of power and prosperity—received especial attention. And the worst object lesson in intemperance was furnished by the Court itself. Little wonder that the protest of the Puritan was so strenuous when manners and customs throughout the land had become so debased.

The Drama was deteriorating—coarseness and sensuality marked every walk in life; and, save in country districts remote from Town life, it was rare to find any of those graces and sobrieties which characterized the finer spirits of Elizabeth's Court. And when the Court set so loose an example, it is scarcely to be wondered that drunkenness should be so prevalent.

The staple drink was beer—even the children were given it—and the variations were rung on beer and wine. Although tea and coffee were introduced at the close of the Age, not for a long time did they become popular substitutes for alcohol.

The Puritan had no thought of suppressing the ordinary liquor traffic, but he did frown upon those feasts and frolics (weddings and funerals were frolics alike in those times, and for the matter of that are in many parts even to-day) where drunkenness and worse excesses came as an inglorious finale to the celebration.

During the previous century social changes of the

utmost importance had been coming about. There had been a time when England was ruled by aristocrats and churchmen, and members of the middle class found their energies chiefly occupied by Trade and Commerce. During the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. a vigorous demand on behalf of the upper middle classes for a share in the task of government made itself felt. In place of the barons and the churchmen who monopolized political power in earlier days, a man like Sir Nicholas Bacon was able to come to the front and bring his sons to the fore after him. Of these only the greatest need be mentioned, Francis Bacon.

The future Lord Chancellor was born at York House, in the Strand—then "the Strand" indeed, for it actually adjoined the very banks of the Thames.

The well-known three-arched watergate, designed by Inigo Jones, still remains to recall the fact. It is the only portion of York House which can still be seen.

Francis Bacon's career began when he entered Gray's Inn in 1576. This, at any rate, still stands to recall the daily life of the philosopher statesman.

No Inn of Court has ever been able to boast a more zealous member than Francis Bacon. Doubtless the position of his father secured for the youth all possible privileges. At any rate, a few months after entry he was promoted to "be of the grand company and not to be bound to any vacacions." In 1580, he was even granted the privilege of securing "beare, bred, and wyne" direct from the buttery. Finally, on the 17th of October 1608, Francis was elected "Tresorer of this house of Graies Inn, nowe after ye decease of Sir Cuthbert Pepper, Knight."

No part of London is more intimately associated

with the great philosopher than Gray's Inn. He was a famous builder, "Bacon's Buildings" arising over the site now occupied by No. 1 Gray's Inn Square. But what Francis Bacon considered more important was the Garden. In 1591 he was one of a committee of Benchers appointed to consider the enclosure of a part of "our back feild." In 1598 he set about levelling the walks. The account books of the Inn mention "the supply of more yonge elme trees' in the places of such as are decayed and that a new rayle and quicksett hedge be set upon the upper long walke at the good discretion of Mr. Bacon." The essay, "Of Gardens," was written about 1622 in the chambers overlooking the gardens of Gray's Inn. This fact alone justifies every Londoner in recalling this aspect of the great philosopher's nature rather than the better remembered picture of the disgraced politician and the dishonoured statesman.

The deeds of Francis Bacon which have power to-day were conceived in the peaceful retreats of Gray's Inn Gardens, rather than in the hurly-burly of political strife and intrigue.

The case of Francis Bacon was only one of many which might be cited. Many of the leading politicians and thinkers were connected with the Inns of Court. John Evelyn was a member of the Inner Temple. The great-souled Selden passed from Oxford University to Clifford's Inn and the Inner Temple. He was buried in the Temple Church. The reason is at once apparent when it is remembered that the law was, of all others, *the* career for a member of the upper middle classes. Most of the Inns of Court had been established for some centuries. The Inner and the Middle Temple about 1340; Clifford's Inn about 1345, Lincoln's Inn about 1310, Gray's Inn about 1357. Long before the

seventeenth century they had played their part in the moulding of national life and customs. But it was the definite rise of an upper middle class, and the coming of the members of this class into political life, that gave the Inns of Court their chief claim upon the interest of Londoners. Since the days of Francis Bacon, the lawyers have taken an ever-increasing part in the government of the country. To-day, the preponderance of lawyers in the House of Commons is generally recognized as being beyond all reason.

Bacon interested himself in the Masque, which was so prominent an entertainment in the Courts of both James and Charles. Indeed, he wrote an essay on the subject, discoursing on the colours which are "of most glory by candlelight." He spent two thousand pounds over one masque produced at the Inns of Court for the Somerset wedding.

But to return to Puritan London.

It would have been tempting to have remained longer in the quiet haunts of Gray's Inn with Francis Bacon. But the progress of events compels us to move westward. The growing importance of Parliament, and the ever-increasing influence of the lawyer class, led, naturally enough, to the concentration of London's interests at Westminster. During the period of growth, and the time of the ascendancy of Puritanism, Westminster Hall was the geographical point around which events moved.

In earlier times Westminster Hall had been identified with the King rather than with the people. It was built originally by William Rufus in 1097—a mere "bed-chamber to the palace which I will ere long raise

up," as the King boasted. Stow tells of more than one famous feast held within its walls.

There it was, "upon the Day of the Circumcision of Our Lord," in 1236, that Henry III. caused "60,000 poore people to be fed at Westminster," . . . "the weake and aged to be placed in the Great Hall and in the lesser, those that were most strong and in reasonable plight in the King's chamber, the children in the Queene's."

As Westminster Hall stands to-day, however, it owes more to its second builder, Richard II., than to Rufus. Richard it was who ordered the construction of the magnificent roof of "Cobwebless" oak designed by Master Henry de Yeveley, master mason, with its hammer beams carved with angels. The string-course running round the hall is marked with the white hart couchant, the favourite emblem of the ill-fated king. In the year in which the new Westminster Hall was finished, Parliament assembled there to listen to Richard the Second's renunciation of the Crown and the accession oath of his rival, Henry IV. of Lancaster.

During the reigns of the later Tudors, Westminster Hall was the scene of some of the great public trials. Here More was condemned. Here Henry VIII. attended in State to witness the trial of Lambert for heresy. In Stuart times, Strafford was tried and condemned—for loving his King too well.

Nor was this all. In addition to the great State Trials in the Great Hall, Westminster was the scene of the labours of the other courts of law. Here was the room in which the Star Chamber met. This Court was equivalent to the judicial committee of the Privy Council of to-day. As it dealt with both civil and criminal cases and was unfettered by the ordinary and

recognized legal rules, it was eminently fitted to be the instrument of the King in the difficulties incidental to every period of transition. Plausible excuses had to be found for injustices in an era when the man in the street considered himself learned in the law. How general was the capacity for taking advantage of legal technicalities, and how great was the gusto with which legal points were debated, is shown by the legal experiences of the famous John Lilburne.

Lilburne was a Puritan of Puritans; bred upon Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, this arch-agitator developed a genius for falling foul of the law in very early life. Before he was twenty-five years of age (in 1637) he was of sufficient notoriety to be haled before the Star Chamber for printing and circulating unlicensed books. He was sentenced to a term in the pillory and a public whipping. On the 18th of April 1638, Lilburne was scourged from Fleet Street to the gate of Westminster Hall. Stripped to the waist, with bloody back, and a shouting mob at his heels, Lilburne proved that he had the courage of his opinions. Far from stopping his career as an agitator, Lilburne's experiences only confirmed him in his ways. When it was no longer possible to agitate against the Royalists, Lilburne took up the cudgels of controversy against his former allies. Truly, no man ever earned the epitaph which was chosen to sum up his career more fairly than Lilburne. It runs :—

> Is John departed or is Lilburne gone ?
> Farewell to Lilburne and farewell to John—
> But lay John here, lay Lilburne here about,
> For if they ever meet they will fall out.

By the irony of fate, this "man of peace" died in 1657 —a professed Quaker.

Doubtless all the folk of the town turned out to witness the enforced march of the unfortunate agitator. And in truth it must have been a motley crowd. The tavern keepers and inn haunters of Fleet Street, the retainers in the noble houses in the neighbourhood of the Strand, the shopkeepers and apprentices, here and there an aristocrat and his fair dame. But nowhere can the crowd have been more curious than in the neighbourhood of Westminster Hall itself. Even Paul's Walk could not have surpassed it. Part of the space was taken up by the stalls of booksellers and law stationers. The Hall was also a famous resort of dealers in toys. There sempstresses sold gloves and ribbons. All had a cheer or a curse for the miserable Lilburne.

Amid the throng were the bewigged, black-gowned lawyers, who excited the astonishment of Peter the Great half a century later, and drew from the Russian monarch the historic assertion, "Lawyers? Why, I have but *two* in my whole dominion, and I'm thinking of hanging one directly I get back." Small wonder that a cynic who visited Westminster Hall in the seventeenth century took particular trouble to include in his list of those present "a deep-mouthed cryer commanding impossibilities, viz. silence to be kept among women and lawyers." The crier must have seemed almost the only human evidence of law and order in this professed centre of law and order.

If more evidence is wanted to justify Westminster Hall being regarded as the centre of life in Puritan London, three facts may be recalled. Here it was that Charles was condemned to death. Here it was that Cromwell, in a robe of purple velvet, with the gold sceptre in one hand and a richly gilt and bossed Bible

in the other, was formally invested with the office of Protector. Here it was that, after the mock execution at Tyburn, the head of Cromwell was finally exposed to public contumely by being thrust upon a pole fixed to the roof overlooking Palace Yard. Westminster Hall was the scene of the birth, the prime, and death of Puritanism—as Controller of the destinies of the Country. Needless to say, Puritanism itself never perished, for at the very moment of its political decline it was born anew in Literature. Never did it sway men's hearts and compel their consciences more truly than when it spoke through the noble cadences of *Paradise Lost* and the homely simplicity of the *Pilgrim's Progress.*

The merits and defects of Puritanism as a stimulus for the imagination and a guide to conduct may be found typified in Milton and Cromwell. Each in his own way, the one with the pen, the other with the 'sword of the Lord and of Gideon,' tried to make Puritanism a living force in the national life; and in each case London is the centre from which radiated his influence.

In many respects a greater than either, the poor tinker of Bedford is naturally associated with the later history of the time. But his relations with London were too slender for us to speak of him here. Not till he was famous did he come to the City and crowd the church at Southwark. But he was not a Londoner in any sense of the word.

Milton's writings do not reflect the concrete London of his day, as Shakespeare's do; but none the less they supply a valuable commentary on the forces animating contemporary life. And for our purpose, the period

in his life the least interesting to the literary student is the most fruitful of suggestion. The classic form of his poetry gives only partial glimpses of the political and religious convictions of the Man. In his pamphlets —we get the Puritan partisan, naked and unashamed.

The father of Milton was a scrivener in Bread Street, living at the Sign of the "Spread Eagle"—this being the armorial ensign of the family. On the left, as you came from Cheapside, was "Black Spread Eagle Court." In Bread Street was John Milton born on December 9, 1608. Here was Puritanism nurtured in the very bosom of the Renascence—for was not the "Mermaid" Tavern hard by, where the brilliant Elizabethan wits and poets foregathered and caroused.

Young Milton soon showed signs of remarkable literary promise. It seems fitting with one who became such a master of sonorous rhythm that he should have shaped well as an organist, but his whole-hearted allegiance was given to Literature. Proud and austere even at College, he conceived as lofty a view of the poet's calling as did Wordsworth two centuries later, and, like Wordsworth, felt himself to be a consecrated spirit. Nor was this a mere idle boast. In an Age of considerable license and loose manners, Milton set a fine example by his sobriety of life. It was said of him by a contemporary, that when travelling abroad he offended the Italians by his strict morality and outspoken attacks on Popery. In 1638 he lodged at a tailor's house in St. Bride's Churchyard, which he changed later on for a 'pretty garden house' in Aldersgate Street, at that time a quiet neighbourhood. With him lived two young nephews, who found in their uncle a kindly though Spartan mentor.

In 1640 the Long Parliament met, and Episcopal government was violently attacked. Milton's religious sympathies were at once aroused, and with all alacrity he plunges into the fray. Three pamphlets from his pen: *Of Reformation touching Church Discipline in England* (May-June 1641); *Prelatical Episcopacy* (June-July); *Animadversion upon the Remonstrance Defense.* In the last he attacks Joseph Hall, the champion of the Episcopal cause. These pamphlets were not signed, though no mystery was made of the authorship. Also in 1641, Milton wrote under his own name a pamphlet, *The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy.*

Uncompromising directness and passionate vehemence characterize all these documents. His avowed object had been, he says, 'to write plainly and roundly,' for he had resolved 'to vindicate the spotless truth from an ignominious bondage whose native worth is now become of such low esteem that she is like to find small credit with us for what she can say. . . .'

The last pamphlet differs from those preceding, for in place of dealing with the question historically he approaches it from a philosophic standpoint. His method is discursive and speculative, and he certainly adopts a larger point of view than before.

What interests us here is the extraordinary display in the pamphlets of Milton's passion for Independence. He feels far too strongly to write and reason temperately: fierce and bitter denunciation, tempestuous personalities are hurled against his opponents. That acute sense of the righteousness of his own Cause, which has always characterized the Puritan, and made of him so merciless an opponent, animates Milton's political writings.

And these tracts are the more remarkable when we

recall the fact that they came from a quarter where Puritanism was seldom found. The Scholar of the time, saturated with academic traditions, sensitive to the romantic appeal of Shakespeare and his School, had more in common with the Cavaliers than the party of the Roundheads. Yet this admirer of Shakespeare, this writer of Masques, this precise Scholar, chooses to side with the party which frowned on amusements and despised profane letters.' And although the literary student will miss in his prose nearly all those qualities which give desirability and distinction to his poetry, the pamphlets indicate the Man even more fully than the epics. One is not accustomed to think of Milton as one thinks of Sir Thomas More and Shelley, and yet there is as much of the Utopian dreamer about him. "I did but prompt the Age to quit their clogs," he said. And assuredly, it was the aspiration for a cleaner, juster, sweeter world that fed the fire of his passion for liberty. Behind the violent, scurrulous pamphleteer was the Idealist. Always is he on the side of liberty—whether it be religious or civil, and although I could quite imagine Charles Stuart would have proved a more congenial companion for Cromwell than Milton, yet he approves the fate of the King and welcomes Cromwell warmly.

The least ephemeral of the tracts, and the best known, is the *Areopagitica*—a speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing. This was published in 1644, and was cast in the form of a speech addressed to the Parliament. After complimenting them he declares so highly does he esteem their wisdom that he will pay them the 'supreme compliment' of questioning one of their ordinances. Forthwith he quotes the Printing Ordinance, June 14, 1643, enacting that no Book,

Pamphlet, or Paper should thenceforth be printed unless it had previously been approved and licensed by the official censors or one of them.

Books, he says, were things of which a Commonwealth ought to take no less vigilant charge than of their living subjects. "For Books do contain a potency of life in them, to be as active as that soul whose progeny they are." . . . "As good almost kill a man as kill a good book; who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself. . . . A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. . . . What if the principle of State licensing were carried out?" he asks. "Shall the State regulate singing, dancing, looking out at windows, standing on balconies, eating, drinking, dressing, love-making?" Even, he argues, if the end were honestly the suppression of bad books, and that were practicable, all would depend on the qualification of the Licensers. As to these gentlemen, Milton expresses himself with his usual frankness.

Milton sympathized as little with the Presbyterian party as he did with the Episcopal, which indeed logically he could scarce help doing. And there is a passage where he shows clearly how comical a notion the idea of an official 'minister of religion' has become. He calls it 'being religious by deputy . . . or the use of a Popular London Clergyman.' It is certainly extremely interesting from the light it throws on the psychology of the Puritan, and in its mocking humour will remind the modern reader of certain passages in *Fors Clavigera*. Here is an extract:—

A wealthy man, addicted to his pleasure and profits, finds Religion to be a traffic so entangled, and of so many peddling accounts, that of all mysteries he cannot skill to keep a stock going on that trade. What should he do? Fain would he have the name to be religious; fain would he bear up with his neighbours in that. What does he therefore but resolves to give over toiling and to find himself out some factor to whose care and credit he may commit the whole managing of his religious affairs. . . . To him he adheres; resigns the whole warehouse of his religion, with all the locks and keys, into his study, and indeed makes the very person of that man his religion, esteeming his associating with him a sufficient evidence and commendation of his own piety. So that a man may say his Religion is now no more within himself but . . . goes and comes near him according as that good man frequents the house. He entertains him . . . lodges him . . . and after the Malmsey or some well spiced beverage, and better breakfasted than He whose morning appetite would have gladly fed on green figs between Bethany and Jerusalem, his Religion walks abroad at eight, and leaves his kind entertainer in the shop, trading all day without his religion.

It is quite true that in the theory of toleration advocated by the *Areopagitica* Milton is not inclined to go so far as some of his contemporaries, but here, as in many other cases, the principle advocated carries its exponent far beyond that which he wots in its advocacy.

And nothing could be fuller or more explicit than his demand—"Give me the liberty to know and to argue freely according to my conscience, above all liberties."

In 1645 he left Aldersgate, and a more spacious dwelling than the "Garden House" was found in Barbican, but in 1647 he leaves this for a small house in High Holborn, near Lincoln's Inn Fields. During the whole of this period, 1639-1649, Milton devoted

himself almost entirely to politics, and what he believed to be the call of duty to his country. Then, in 1649, came the offer of the Latin Secretaryship. Hitherto he had been a political free lance: now he was offered an official post in a government, many of whose leaders — Hutchinson, Fairfax, Cromwell, had long stirred his enthusiasm and admiration.

It was an important step for a student to take, for it brought him for the first time into the very thick of the fight. It gave him an insight into the actualities of the day, which otherwise he would not have got. His worldly experiences are not turned to much poetical use, but there is certainly a reminiscence of Whitehall in the celestial description in *Paradise Lost.* His chief duty was to translate foreign despatches into 'dignified Latin.' At first he had rooms in Whitehall, but subsequently moved to another 'pretty garden house' in Westminster. This house became No. 19 York Street, and is associated also with the names of Bentham, James Mill, and Hazlitt. It no longer exists, having been demolished in 1877.

Blindness made his duties difficult, and rendered assistance imperative. Among those who helped him in the discharge of his duties was Andrew Marvell.

Marvell was one of the remarkable figures of the time. A fine, unflinching patriot, a gay and tender poet, a staunch friend, a scrupulously fair enemy. Though a member of the popular party, he lived in comparative poverty for many years at Highgate. The old lady who inhabited his house early in the nineteenth century, thus expatiated to a literary pilgrim —Mr. Samuel Carter Hall: "They say this was Andrew Marvell's closet where he wrote *sense*; but when he wrote *poetry* he used to sit below in his

garden." Opposite to his house lived some of the family of Cromwell.

Milton served through the Protectorate. The persecution of the Vaudois, which he had officially to protest against on behalf of his country, called forth from the poet one of his finest sonnets.

At the Restoration he was arrested, but subsequently released 'on paying his fees.' He lived quietly and frugally at Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields,—blind, infirm, and weary, but unchanged in resolution formed years before. The resolution found expression in *Paradise Lost*, for which he was offered munificently 'five pounds down, five pounds more upon the sale of each of the first three editions.' Ten pounds in all came into the poet's hands in 1669. After his death the copyright was sold by his widow for about eight pounds more.

The agreement was given to the British Museum by Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet.

The *Epic* was published in 'Little Britain,'—the bookseller's quarter, which stretched from Botolph Church, Aldersgate, to Bartholomew's Hospital,—and for a while lay unnoticed on the bookstalls. The story goes that the Earl of Dorset was in Little Britain, beating about for books to his taste. There was *Paradise Lost.* He was surprised with some passages he struck upon, dipping here and there, and bought it. The bookseller begged him to speak in its favour if he liked it, for that they lay on his hands as waste paper. My lord took it home, read it and sent it to Dryden, who in a short time returned it. "This man" (says Dryden) "cuts us all out, and the Ancients too."

There is no need to follow here the works that

succeeded, or their reception. Perhaps the poem in which the man, if not the poet, found fullest utterance is *Samson Agonistes* (1671). Nor need we concern ourselves with the sordid story of his domestic troubles. After months of chronic ill-health, he died, November 8, 1674, of 'gout struck in,' and was buried in St. Giles, Cripplegate, beside his father.

So late as 1735, his nieces Mary and Catherine Milton were living at Holloway. According to a note in Hazlitt's edition of *Johnson's Lives of the Poets*, 'at that time these ladies possessed a degree of health and strength as enabled them on Sundays and Prayer Days to walk a mile up the steep hill to Highgate Chapel.'

The City and Charles I.

Charles the First.—The City seemed under a curse during the reign of Charles. When he ascended the throne the Plague, which had grimly ushered in his father, once more threw a sinister gloom over the rejoicings. Very early the King showed that he was fully as autocratic as James and far more headstrong. But the stubborn spirit which had resisted the Plantagenet Kings, and had wrested back the ancient liberties in spite of arbitrary government, once again flamed up. The old Independents were reinforced by the growing Puritanism of the Time; and soon it was clear that it would be a fight to the death between the King and Parliament. London was fighting now not merely for itself but for the Nation. There is no need here to recapitulate the long tale of oppressive exaction on one side and stubborn resistance on the other. The first decisive victory was gained after the gigantic protest of the Citizens in 1634. Strafford was the scapegoat.

He was believed to have contemplated 'a plundering of the City,' and his policy of 'Thorough' had effectually roused the Citizens.

The streets were filled with angry and excited men clamouring for the minister's destruction; and so overwhelming was the tide of opinion, that Charles himself was swept away by it. Tower Hill claimed another illustrious victim, and London rejoiced for the first time since the coming of the Stuarts.

The next stage in the tussle between King and Parliament was concerned with the Bishops. In November 1641, the City declared definitely against the Catholic Lords and the Bishops, a declaration which Dr. Gardiner terms 'the turning point in the struggle.' A loan of £50,000 had been asked for (at 8 per cent), and each alderman was pressed, owing to the importance of the matter, to consult with his own ward council as to ways and means. The City consented to the loan, but asked Parliament for the persons of the Catholic Lords to be secured, and demanded that the Bishops, who were the dead-weights on progressive legislation, be deprived of their votes. The Mayor and many of the aldermen were, however, strongly royalist; much to the benefit of Charles. And Charles saw how important it was to win over the City as a whole. He knighted the Mayor and Recorder, and made some remarks at a public reception about the pleasure at finding the better class of citizens loyal; and prophesied rosily about the maintenance of the Protestant Religion and the re-establishment of Trade.

It was all very pretty, and so long as his friends were in power things went fairly smoothly. But at the next election the opposing element predominated, and

they certainly voiced more accurately the feeling of the City. Charles ignored the rising storm of indignation. Once again there were mob riots at Westminster, and cries of "No Bishops." Then Charles directed the trained bands to be called out, to put down 'seditious ways and disorders, by shooting with bullets' or otherwise. Wishing, however, to keep in with the City, he expressed his continued confidence in their loyalty, and attributes the rioting to the 'meane and unrulie people of the suburbs.'

But he was furious at the unflinching opposition of certain Puritan stalwarts in Parliament, and on January 3, 1642, made up his mind to have them arrested.

Even schoolboys less erudite than Macaulay's famous example know the history of the desperate move, and how finally, when Charles strode down the House with an armed retinue, the 'birds had flown.' This was the beginning of the end. Charles added to his errors by leaving London. The struggle between King and Parliament as to the control of the Militia went in favour of Parliament. Charles collected forces, but by the time he had set up his standard at Nottingham (1642) the Puritan faction were in control of the City.

A good picture is given in the Verney Memoirs of the discomforts and miseries suffered by the families of Royalists during the Civil War. The discomforts, one might say, were general—London was in a perpetual ferment and unrest from the day when Charles attempted the arrest of the five members. The extraordinary sums voted by the citizens on behalf of the Parliament, the general atmosphere of bitter party dissension, made it a very miserable time for quiet folk of whatever party. Sir Ralph Verney had neither sided with the

King in his prosperity, nor would fight against him in his adversity. Naturally he had enemies on either side, and his wife was hard put to it, during his absence abroad, to look after his interests.

She thus writes in 1646 :—

We are at this very instant safely arrived here in Southwark, but extreamly weary that I can scarce hold my pen. All provisions are most extreamly dear, beef fourpence, veal and mutton eightpence per pound, corn above eight shillings the bushel. Famine is very much feared. There was neavor soe much disorder as is nowe in the Towne, for everie one is as much discontented as too possible. The Buttchers have begun the way to all the rest, for within this toe days they all did rise upon the exise man and burnt downe the exise house and flung the exise money forth into the middle of the street, and they say beat some of the exise men. The Houses were in much disorder upon this but dare not hang any of them ; they say they will leave this to the law, which cannot hang them for the law only makes itt a riott.

Again, here is a comment on the Puritan Preachers :—

One heares a very strange sort of sarvis, and in such a tone that most people doe nothing but laughe at it. And everybody that receeves must be examined before the Elders, whoe they all swere asketh them suche questions that would make me blush to relate.

In turning from the Man of letters—Milton—to the Man of action—Cromwell, the secret of Puritan dynamics is more fully disclosed. There was little about Cromwell of that hardness and austere reserve, common to many puritans, and characteristic certainly of Milton. Milton triumphed because of his fiery sincerity and high imagination ; Cromwell because of his genuine kindliness of heart and his rare sense of justice. From the days when he was an obscure member of the House to the time when he held the destinies of

the country in his hand, no one of his contemporaries equalled him for the dogged consistency and unselfish bravery with which he championed the cause of the poor against the rich. There was none to plead for them, and he stepped forward despite the danger then attaching to any sympathisers with the people.

And just as his zeal on their behalf and his kindness of manner attached the poorer classes to him, so did his unpretentious directness and "familiar rustic carriage" endear him to the soldiers whom he led.

There was nothing here of that genuine 'Kill-Joy' attitude which made the Presbyterian so unpopular. Cromwell could relax on occasion, as his friends well knew, and that the more gracious elements of his character were not oftener forthcoming we may attribute to the seriousness of the work he had to do.

And yet no man courted popularity less than he did, or felt more acutely lack of sympathy. But there was something Titanic about his resolution; never did he flinch from any course of which his conscience approved. We may criticize the wisdom and the humanity of certain aspects of his policy; its sincerity and patriotism or, considering his age and generation, its tolerance, we cannot. "See what a multitude of people come to attend your triumph"? was said to him on one occasion. "More would come to see me hanged," was the grim reply. And no doubt it was perfectly true. To be well hated and misunderstood is both the privilege and tragedy of the strong man.

Cromwell's strenuous career is part of the history of the Nation rather than of London, and no apology is needed for dealing only with those incidents in his life which have impressed Londoners the most. It is to Whitehall that we must turn—the Whitehall which

saw the execution of Charles I.—and the death of the Protector.

As a matter of fact the term Whitehall is a common term not only for the Royal Palaces in England, but for the assembly place for the Peers—Stow called it 'Whitehall of the Royal Palace of Westminster'—and for many baronial halls over England. The term was first applied to the Palace about the time of Elizabeth; formerly it had been known as York House, or York Place. In olden times this Palace had been the residence of Archbishops of York; and in the reign of Henry the Eighth, Wolsey is supposed to have rebuilt the place. And it is possible that after his disgrace the King renamed it. At any rate such was the popular opinion in Shakespeare's time:—

> . . . Sir!
> You must no more call it York Place: that's past,
> For since the Cardinal fell that title's lost;
> 'Tis now the King's and called White Hall.

About 1240, the monks of Westminster granted to the Chief Justiciar of Henry the Third—Hubert de Burgh, a stately mansion which he occupied for two years. On his death, it is said, he left the property to the Church of the Black Friars, and they in their turn sold the place to Walter de Grey, Archbishop of York. To these Archbishops it belonged until the time of the Tudors, and was known as York House.

Henry made it his royal residence after the fall of his Minister, and succeeding monarchs lived there until the place was practically destroyed by fire in 1698.

Evelyn records it thus in his Diary:—

2 Jan. (1698).—Whitehall burnt—nothing but walls and ruins left.

James the First thought to rebuild it and selected Inigo Jones for the work—he had been appointed Surveyor-General in 1613—but the Banqueting House was the only part of the contemplated work which was carried out—this being due it is said, to the extravagance of the Court. Inigo Jones had planned Whitehall on a vast and important scale.

Charles the First employed Rubens to paint the ceiling, and had intended to secure the services of Vandyck for painting the walls. He built a great room for the performance of Masques, but the Civil War put an end to further plans for rebuilding.

Cromwell was not among those who sought eagerly for the blood of the King. If possible, he would have spared him: but the vacillation and treachery of Charles during the negotiations made any other solution, in the then state of public affairs, fraught with the gravest dangers. Having made up his mind that the King must die, he signed the warrant promptly. Before this, Bradshaw the President had pronounced sentence of death against Charles, 'all the Court to the number of sixty-seven owning to it by standing up.'

Charles heard his doom with fortitude, a fortitude he preserved up to the very last. Then on January 30, 1649, he was escorted through the Park to Whitehall, dressed, it is said, in a long black coat and grey stockings, and rich red-striped silk waistcoat. He was cool and collected, and walked rapidly until he arrived at the place where now stands the Scotch Office. Then ascending the stairs he retired to his 'usual bedchamber' in the upper storey of the Holbein Gate. Shortly afterwards Colonel Hacker came for him with the last grim summons. Charles bade him go, saying that he would follow, then taking leave of his friends, he passed along

the Galleries and Banqueting House till he came to the scaffold, probably situate, suggests Dr. Sheppard, in the open space "between the Banqueting House and the Tiltyard, through which the public traffic took its course between Westminster and Charing Cross."

Having assumed a white satin cap, the King asked whether his hair was in the way. Then turning to Bishop Juxon, who was offering the usual ghostly consolation, he remarked, "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown." In a disjointed speech to the crowds standing round, he maintained his innocence, "declared himself a good Christian," and said, referring to the people,—"I desire their liberty and freedom as much as whomsoever, but I must tell you that their liberty and freedom consists in having of Government those laws by which their life and their goods may be most their own." "It is not for having a share in Government, Sirs—that is nothing pertaining to them; a subject and a sovereign are clear different things." Then after some involved sentences whose meaning it is hard to ascertain, he concluded by calling himself "the Martyr of the People."

One must not press too hardly upon the logic of a dying declaration, but I find it hard to commend this speech as some have done. So far as I can elucidate its meaning it seems to show that Charles had not learned and was not likely to learn his lesson. For the rest, his general demeanour and courage deserve all the encomium they received, and we may echo the words of a Chronicler that he "died much greater than he had lived." Andrew Marvell, the friend and admirer of Cromwell, himself testified in verse that Charles—

> Nothing common did or mean
> Upon that memorable scene.

According to a contemporary, "the executioners were two, and disguised in saylors clothes with visands and peruques unknown ; yet some have a conceit that he that gave the stroke was one Collonell Foxe, and the other Captain Joyce, who took the King from Holmby, but that is not beleeved."

Charles had asked to be allowed to give the signal, and upon his stretching out his hand, the axe descended, severing the head on the instant. "Behold the head of a traitor!" said the executioner, lifting it up so that the crowd might see.

Thus died Charles the First, and thus triumphed the Puritan spirit of the burgher class. And so he was gathered to his fathers and Cromwell reigned in his stead.

Before considering certain associations which Cromwell had with London, it may be well to look at some of the distinctive social features in the Life of London during this period. At no time in our history has the dress of a period proved so completely the outward and visible sign of the inward convictions. A veritable clothes philosophy could be woven from the dull looking, neat, plainly-cut garments of the Puritan, and the silk and lace and fine plumed hat of the Cavalier ; the imposing gorgeousness of the Court Lady, and grey silk gown and simple hood of the Puritan Lady. Some, at any rate, had heeded Harrison's protest, though in many cases no doubt that worthy critic, who had an eye for pretty effects, would consider the other extreme had been reached. Ben Jonson wrote of Puritans having 'Religion in their garments, and their hair cut shorter than their eyebrows.'

The Civil War brought to the front many remarkable women, both on the Puritan and Cavalier side.

Lady Henley, the Countess of Derby, Lady Bankes, Lady Verney; in patience, courage, endurance, they take their place with the best of the Cavaliers and Puritans. In fact, with the clash and horror inseparable from Civil War, the nobler elements in our national character sprang into prominence. The serious issues at stake sobered all classes; and the shallow frivolity that prevailed during the reign of James the First was shamed into silence. It is only fair to differentiate between the Courts of James and Charles. Charles was a finer character than his father, more thoughtful, more refined, and unquestionably purer in his private life. Even his critics admitted "the nobility of his courtiers, who did not quite abandon their debaucheries yet so reverenced the King as to retire into corners to practise them."

Henrietta Maria had so great a passion for the Stage that she figured prominently in Court Theatricals. It was after her appearance that Prynne published his Puritan diatribe against the drama, *Histrio-Mastix*.

The Puritans had not always disapproved of plays—but the debased condition of the drama drove many of them to take up an uncompromising attitude. The outburst had little effect upon the popularity of the drama or the masque, and two years afterwards another Puritan wrote *Comus*, thus showing that all were not of the same opinion.

Comus was written for one of the finer class of Cavalier families—the thoughtful and artistic Egertons. But when the Puritan came into power, the theatre was closed, and though musical entertainments were allowed, bear-baiting and cock-fighting, so dear to the hearts of the common people, were put an end to.

Three sketches of Cromwell from contemporary

sources may serve to show what the men of his time thought of the Man.

The first is from the satirist and Cavalier poet, John Cleveland[1]—an 'hosanna to Cromwell' he calls out—'one that hath beat up his drums clean through the Old Testament: you may learn of the Genealogy of our Saviour by the names in his regiment: The master uses no other list but the first chapter of Matthew. This Cromwell is never so valorous as when he is making speeches for the association, which nevertheless he doth somewhat ominously with his neck awry, holding up his ear as if he expected Mahomet's pigeon to come and prompt him. He should be a bird of prey too by his bloody beak.'

The second picture I take from the account given by Sir Philip Warwick, a Royalist of a more serious type:—

> The first time that ever I took notice of him was in the very beginning of the Parliament held in November 1648, when I vainly thought myself a courtly young gentleman . . . I came one morning into the House well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking (whom I knew not), very ordinary apparelled, for it was a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor; his linen was plain and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar; his hat was without a hatband, his soutane was of a good size, his sword stuck close to his side, his countenance swollen and reddish, his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervour.

Thirdly, there is the picture of the Puritan to Governor Winthrop:—

[1] Cleveland fought for Charles and was imprisoned by Cromwell. The latter set him free upon being told that he was too poor to purchase his release.

His temper exceeding fiery as I have known, but the flame of it kept down for the most part, or soon allayed by those moral endowments he had. He was naturally compassionate towards objects in distress even to an effeminite measure, though God made him an heart, wherein was left little room for any fear, but what was due to himself, of which there was a large proportion. Yet did he exceed in tenderness towards sufferers. A larger soul, I think, hath seldom dwelt in a house of clay than his own.

Born at Huntingdon, 25th of April 1599, a year before the birth of Charles, his boyhood was passed in a time gloomy with strife and sickness. There is a curious legend that on his way to London he was taken to Hinchenbrook in 1604, and there in the hall of his uncle Sir Oliver, met the youthful Charles, whom he worsted in a boyish tussle. At Sidney Sussex, Cambridge, one of the 'nurseries of Puritanism,' according to Laud, he was 'not so much addicted to speculation as to action.'—Thus said his tutor.

In 1620, when Milton, a boy of twelve, was studying at St. Paul's School, Oliver married Elizabeth Bourchier in St. Giles, Cripplegate.

Fifty-four years later, Milton was buried in the same church.

There are many portraits of Cromwell—Cooper, Walker, Lely, and Faithorne drew him from the life. Perhaps, Cooper's portrait is the best known; there is a large drawing by Cooper in the Master's house at Sidney Sussex. There is a remarkable general resemblance in all of them, and we have a portrait of a big, powerful, thickset man, with a squarish head flanked by long, ashen-grey curls; keen, blue, penetrating, and melancholy eyes; a broad, fleshy face with the much ridiculed red nose, and a heavy chin; in complexion,

coarse and weather-beaten; in manner, passionate, direct, prompt, kindly—yet always with a latent sadness.

At one time Cromwell lived in King Street, Westminster, but in 1649 he removed to the Cockpit, and it was not till 1654 that he took possession of Whitehall. A rather pathetic touch to the anxieties of the Lord Protector is given by Ludlow's account of Cromwell's mother, who 'would often be afraid when she heard the noise of a musquat, that her son was shot, being exceedingly dissatisfied unless she might see him once a day at least.' Cromwell's wife seemed uncomfortable in her new surroundings, being of a simple and thrifty nature, unused to the luxury in which she found herself placed at Whitehall. One cannot help being amused by her instructions to 'a surveyor to make her some little labyrinths and trap stairs by which she might, at all times unseen pass to and fro, and come unawares upon her servants and keep them vigilant in their places and honest in the discharge thereof.'

Very gorgeous was the ceremony of Installation, and unanimous the accounts of the dignified bearing of the Lord Protector. It is possible that the Lady Protectress may have disapproved of the profuse hospitality associated with Cromwell's occupation of Whitehall. He kept 'open table' on every Monday for all the officers of his army who had attained the rank of Captain, besides a smaller table every week for such officers as came accidentally to Court.

Evelyn writes of the Palace as 'very glorious and well furnished'—1656.

In the August of 1658 Cromwell fell ill of a complaint supposed by some to be a form of influenza;

though in certain quarters sinister suggestions of poison have been forthcoming. Be that as it may, we find General Monk writing to 'Secretary Thurloe' on August 16th:[1]—

I am sorry to hear his Highness hath bin so ill lately; but I hope the worst of his sickness is past. My prayer shall be to God to preserve his health; for truly if he should chance to be called away, before it pleased God he had settled the Government, I doubt we should be in a very bad condition. . . .

On the 24th of August, Thurloe writes to Henry Cromwell thus:—[1]

His Highness continuing ill hath given a stop to all business; he was so well on Friday that we hoped the worst of his sickness was over; but it pleased God that upon Saturday morning he fell into a fit of an ague. . . . He came from Hampton Court hither, all the doctors judging this to be much the better place; besides the advantage which the change of air usually gives for the recovery out of agues. . . .

Throughout his illness Cromwell behaved with wonderful patience, though he was well aware of the critical state of affairs and of the urgency of his return to health. On the 30th he summoned a Council, who 'spent their breath in praying.' The Protector believed that God would restore him to health in order that he might perfect his work. But it was soon evident to others, if not to himself, that the end was near; and on September 3, the anniversary of Dunbar, to the accompaniment of a devastating storm, Cromwell passed away.

Thus writes Thurloe on the following day:—

It hath pleased God to put an end to his days. He died yesterday about four of the clock in the afternoon. I am not

[1] Thurloe's *State Papers*, vol. vii. p. 339 *et seq.*

able to speak or write; this stroke is so sore, so unexpected, the Providence of God in it so stupendous, considering the person that is fallen. . . . I can do nothing, but put my mouth in the dust and say, it is the Lord; and though His ways be not always known, yet they are always righteous and we must submit to his will . . . he lived desired, and died lamented, everybody bemoaning themselves and saying—A great man is fallen in Israel.

Finally, more telling than much rhetoric, was this simple statement of the Funeral:—

The funeral of his late highness was solemnized this day with very great honour, but alas! it was his funeral!

There is no need here to examine the policy of Cromwell, but this may be said: that if Cromwell's political efforts met with ill success, his ideas survived. He failed as a politician in much the same way as Charles failed in trying to establish something alien to the spirit of the nation. Military despots have succeeded abroad, but Englishmen would have none of them. Admirable as a destructive force, Cromwell found the work of construction too hard: nor can we wonder at this, realising the stupendous difficulties that faced him. But he left a fruitful legacy of ideas behind him,—none more fruitful than his insistence on liberty of thought in the teeth of the extremists of the day. This it was that attracted Milton towards him, and the saintly George Fox. It is quite true that the toleration he preached, moderate as it may seem to us to-day, was swept aside at the Restoration, yet it was not destroyed. It is also true, that Puritanism had proved itself unfitted to be the sole inspiration of national statecraft. But I believe that it supplied the leaven of the far-reaching Benthamite reforms in the earlier half of the nineteenth

Century. And if, as Mr. Gardiner has said, 'his Puritanism descended from the proud position to which he had raised it,' we may at any rate add, adapting the dictum on Charles, that it was greater in its fall than ever it had been in its days of power.

CHAPTER X

THE LONDON OF PEPYS AND WREN

Come all you nobles, you that are neat ones,
Hyde Park is now both fresh and green.
Come all you gallants that are great ones,
And are desirous to be seen.

A Song of Hyde Park (1671).

London doth mourn, Lambeth is quite forlorn!
Trades cry, woe worth that ever they were born!
. . . . . .
Long banished must we live from our friends.
. . . . . .
From Winter, Plague, Pestilence, good Lord, deliver us.

THOMAS NASH (*c.* 1600).

LONDONERS were heartily sick of religious dissensions. Ever since Thomas Cromwell had embarked on the Dissolution of the Monasteries, religion had been thrust before them, almost always in bloody guise. The executions on Tower Hill and at Tyburn, the burnings at Smithfield, the bitterness of civil strife—these things were all associated with religion. Many a Londoner to whom the constitutional questions involved in the contest between Charles the First and his parliaments were a matter of no great import, felt keenly enough the interference of the puritan in his pleasures and amusements. Others there were, peacefully inclined, moderate in views, who were inclined to cry to both

Cavalier and Roundhead, 'A Plague on both your Houses.' In short, every one desired a rest.

Not that Puritanism was eradicated; but it was no longer in possession of the helm of State. Indirectly, not directly, was it to affect the Life of the Nation.

In the City the Puritan Sunday was quite an institution, and the repressive legislation of the reign shows how considerable yet was the influence of the ministers.

Ever since the fifteenth century family life had been notable for the formal, strained relationships existing between parents and children. Exceptions there were, we know, but on the whole it seemed to have been the idea that the youth of Tudor and Stuart times should be brought up "by hand" in much the same way as poor Pip imagined he had been by Joe Gargery's sister. Beating was quite common for both girls and boys on the slightest provocation; the whole duty of motherhood was to marry the girls willy-nilly at the first suitable opportunity. The Paston Letters bear testimony to this. Now, the philosopher Locke urges parents to treat their children more kindly, and beat them with more discretion. Education was on strenuous lines in those days. Centuries later the intellectual discipline of the Mills, James and John Stuart, in early life provoked comments of astonishment from modern critics. But in the age of Pepys there were many children who were "gorged with learning" in the most astonishing way. Locke tells of a little boy who began Latin at six, understood 'geography and chronology and the Copernican System of our vortex' at nine, and had some knowledge of anatomy. We must hope he survived it.

But of scarcely less importance was regarded the

accomplishment of dancing, and the Turveydrop of Stuart Times fared handsomely in the way of fees.

The girls of the period went to schools at Hackney and Chelsea, and although, as a rule, they were not taught classics, they sought proficiency in French, music, painting, and dancing. Evelyn's own household is a case in point, where the girls were well educated in Art, Literature, and History.

Looking at the general constitution of society, we notice that the middle class, which had grown up during Tudor Times, and come forward so decisively during the Puritan Revolution, were content for a while to mark time politically, though the standard of education was rising at this period. The Restoration in some respects implied a feudal reaction. It was certainly more than a change of political parties. The aristocrats flock around the Court, leading a life of their own; the middle class devote themselves for the most part to trade; the lawyer and the parson resume somewhat their old exclusiveness. The literary men of the day depend largely upon the patronage of the nobles, and they reflect in their work the levity and license of the Age.

Later on we shall note how the man of letters becomes independent of the patron, and finds a sufficient body of listeners among the middle classes to give him support. But in the Age of Pepys this is not so; never was a time when the man of brains was so dependent on Court influence and approval for a hearing. And so, to properly estimate the character of the Time we must seek, not only the poets and dramatists of the Restoration, but ordinary citizens like Pepys and Evelyn.

The Thames is still the Highway of London, and

the general appearance of the streets (up to 1666) is much the same as in Shakespeare's London. Play-going again has come into fashion, though it is less a popular and more of a fashionable pastime. There is one marked innovation, however, to be noted in the life of the day. We are come to the era of the Parks.

St. James's Park.—A leper hospital and a marshy tract behind it, the more dismal and repellent because connected with the loathsome disease hard by. This occupied the site where now stands St. James's Palace and the fashionable Park. For some reason or other Henry the Eighth fancied the site, and in the place of the hospital grew up a palace for the King; the marshy tract known as St. James's Fields he stocked with game, built a tilt-yard in front of Whitehall, and on Wolsey's death, as we know, took possession of Whitehall itself. The Royal Park was strictly enclosed until the time of the Civil Wars; but although Cromwell is reputed to have taken the air there in a Sedan Chair, Charles the Second it was who first popularized the Park. Probably his travels had inspired him with a liking for the open; certainly, he was a very considerable walker, and had no rooted objection to being seen by his people. His attendants did not relish, however, the King's habit of early rising; they were less able to sleep off their night carousals so blithely as he.

Especially did he favour the locality; were not his mistresses lodged in the neighbourhood—Cleveland at Whitehall, Nell Gwynn at Pall Mall; while for minor distractions was there not an aviary on one side, hence Bird Cage Walk, and were not ducks to be fed and dogs to be played with in the Park itself? Assuredly a man of varied pleasures.

When, at the time of the Revolution of 1689, Whitehall Palace was burned down, St. James's Palace became one of the chief Royal residences. Under William the Third and Anne the Park is the resort of the literary lions of the Time, and the gay insolence of Charles's period is replaced by a staid respectability.

Charles had a considerable liking for ornamental gardening, and the changes he had introduced into the work are recorded with naivè pleasure by Pepys.

October 11, 1660.—To walk in St. James's Park, where we observed the several engines at work drawing water, with which sight I was very much pleased.

July 27, 1662.—I went to walk in the Park, which is now every day more and more pleasant by the new works upon it.

Again :—

In 1664.—To St. James's Park, seeing many people play at Pall Mall, where it pleased me mightily to hear a gallant, lately come from France, swear at one of his companions for suffering his man (a spruce blade) to be so saucy as strike a ball while his master was playing it.

As for its general appearance, there were long rows of elm and lime trees fenced round with palings to protect them. At the Whitehall end a group of buildings occupied the site of the present Government Offices. The old Horse Guards, the Tennis Yard, and Cockpit stood on the site of the present Horse Guards and Government Offices. The King's garden extended south as far as Carlton Terrace. Later on Marlborough House was built on a part of the Garden.

Hyde Park.[1]—Hyde Park, though a less fashionable

[1] Kensington Gardens dates from 1730, when Caroline, Queen of George II., appropriated 300 acres of the Park. Regent's Park did not arise till the Age of the Georges.

resort at the Restoration than St. James's Park, was none the less a rare place for seeing the "gallants" and ladies, a fact to which both the diarists, Pepys and Evelyn, testify. At that time, of course, it was entirely in the country, with Tyburn meadows and the country highway to Acton on the north. Originally it had been a monastic enclosure. The Park had served as the meeting-place of the Commonwealth troops during the Civil War.

Many were the sports held there, and the May festivities were a great feature. Football was apparently indulged in, for we hear in 1654 that 'this day there was a hurling of a great ball by Fifty Cornish Gentlemen of one side, and fifty on the other; one party played in red caps the other in white.'

Cromwell watched the game, and we gather was much interested in the 'great agility of body.' About this time also he endangered his life when driving a four-in-hand along the "Ring."

Evelyn writes of Coach Races, and Pepys of a "fine foot-race three times round the Park."

In addition to Hyde Park and St. James's Park, there is another part of the Town especially connected with the era of Pepys, and that is Queen Street and the neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn Fields.

In Elizabeth's time and during the early years of James the First, the site was almost as cheerless as the swamp on the other side of the Mall. Unlike that, however, it was an open waste infested, as a rule, by vagrants, and occasionally served as a place of execution.

Here did Babington's Conspiracy end.

James determined to have the place 'laid out in

walks like Moorfields,' and appointed Chancellor Bacon and others to undertake the task. The invaluable Inigo Jones was called in, but he only lived to complete part of the work. Building was stimulated, and the members of Lincoln's Inn put in a protest, which Cromwell heeded in 1656, and stayed "all further buildings."

Lord Chancellor Finch lived in Queen Street during Charles the Second's reign, and through the Fields went the thief Sadler and his confederates one night with the Mace and Purse, which they had stolen. Sadler expiated his offence at Tyburn, 1676.

Perhaps the most famous execution in the Fields was that of William, Lord Russell, in 1683.

Portugal Street in Charles's day was a very fashionable place, despite the fact that Drury Lane and its rough characters lay close at hand. Betterton, the famous tragic actor, played at the theatre here.

The plays that chiefly attracted at this time were those of Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher; somewhat later the comedies of Wycherley, Congreve, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh. Most of these are associated with the Theatre at Drury Lane.

On the south side of the Fields stood the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, where now stands the Royal College of Surgeons. This theatre, once a Tennis Court, was opened in 1660 by Sir William Davenant. Pepys declared it "the finest Playhouse that ever was in England." He went so often indeed that, sad to state, it made Mrs. Pepys 'as mad as the devil.' After Davenant's death the theatre became a tennis court once more.

Hard by, in Vere Street, was another theatre, celebrated for the first appearance of an actress on the

English stage (1660). The Puritans were greatly scandalized. Hitherto, of course, female characters had been taken by boys. On this occasion the part of Desdemona was taken by a woman. A special prologue was written for this sensational occasion. Of course that inveterate theatre-lover Pepys did not miss the occasion.

But while the gentry disported in Hyde Park and promenaded in St. James's Park, the humble citizen contented himself with Lamb's Conduit Fields, north of High Holborn, which he varied at times with lengthier excursions to Hoxton Fields and Spa Fields, Clerkenwell.

There being scarcely any phase of life about which the gossiping Pepys has not written, some detailed account of this worthy citizen may not prove out of place.

To his contemporaries Samuel Pepys was little more than a Government official—connected with the Navy Office: to us he is the author of the most fascinating Diary in the language. Born in London, February 23, 1633, son of John Pepys, tailor, Samuel spent his early childhood in Kingsland and Hackney—"Thence to Kingsland, by my nurse's house, Goody Lawrence, where my brother Tom and I were kept when young." He went to school at Huntingdon, moving afterwards to St. Paul's. At this time he was Cromwellian in his sympathies, and he records in his Diary how alarmed he was (Dec. 1660) lest an old school friend should recollect a saying of his on the day of Charles' execution:—

Here dined with us . . . Mr. Christmas, my old school-fellow, with whom I had much talk. He did remember that

I was a great Roundhead when I was a boy, and I was much afraid that he would have remembered the words that I said the day the King was beheaded (that, were I to preach upon him my text should be, 'The memory of the wicked shall rot').

Perhaps this 'deadly drinker' (as Pepys terms him) did not think the exuberance of a Huntingdon schoolboy of special moment.

From St. Paul's to Cambridge (1651), where he was oft "scandalously overserved with drink," among other matters of a more dignified and academic order. After that we know nothing of his doings until his marriage in 1655 to the pretty and penniless fifteen-years-old daughter of an exiled Huguenot. As he had no money of his own at this time things would have gone ill had it not been for Sir Edward Montague (afterwards Lord Sandwich), who took the young couple into his own house and looked after them.

A small clerkship to one of the Exchequer Tellers seemed to Pepys quite a notable affair after this. The salary was £50, but the amount seemed princely to Pepys, who writes in exultant strain about his 'private condition' being 'very handsome,' and revels in the sense of luxury afforded by the house in Axe Yard, Westminster, and a maid-servant of their own; after the small room in his kinsman's house, no doubt it seemed quite palatial. And from this time forward his financial fortunes, faithfully recorded, rise steadily. The Diary was started in 1660, and in the same year he obtains a position on the Navy Board worth to him about £250, exclusive of extras. He soon showed considerable ability in the discharge of his duties, which were certainly not light at that critical period. Axe Yard is exchanged for Seething Lane, and here lived

man and wife for the whole time during which the Diary was written—that is to say, for nine years.

His ambition was to become the historian of the Navy, but although he held such a task 'sorts mightily with my genius,' he published nothing but some dry Memoirs, though he made a great array of material, as the Pepysian Collection shows.

During the time of the Plague he and his clerks lodged at Greenwich, though he went up to town for the meetings at the Navy Office: his wife he had sent to Woolwich. His pluck in sticking to his work during the Plague, and his demeanour during the Great Fire, reflect great credit upon him.

The Navy Board had a bad time in 1667, for the famous insult of De Ruyter in the Medway had angered the Parliament, and when Peace was concluded Pepys and his colleagues were called to account. It fell upon him to prepare the defence, which he did with many misgivings, but fortified by mulled sack and neat brandy, 'whereby he did find himself in better order as to courage truly,' he acquits himself well before a crowded House, and gleefully records with amusing vanity the pleasant things said to him. 'All the world that was within hearing did congratulate me, and cry up my speech as the best thing they ever heard.'

At any rate we feel that he is honestly entitled to the inevitable dinner party and theatre at the close of the day.

In the autumn of 1669 his wife died of a fever, shortly after returning from a tour in France and Holland. Before this sad event in his life his own bad health, chiefly failing eyesight, compelled him to close his unique Diary.

In 1673 he is appointed 'Secretary for the Affairs of the Navy,' and in the same year his Parliamentary longings saw fruition. In 1676 he became Master of the Trinity House, and in the following year of the Clothworker's Company, to whom he gave a silver cup, still preserved. He sat in the Short Parliament of 1679 as Member for Harwich, and the same year got involved in the 'Popish Plot.' Though committed to the Tower he was subsequently discharged (1680). Evelyn firmly believed in his innocence, and has recorded his opinion in his Diary.

After his retirement in 1690 he lived chiefly at Clapham with his clerk, William Hewer, where he kept up a friendly correspondence with most of the notable men of the day, including his old comrades Evelyn, Sir Isaac Newton, and Sir Christopher Wren. It is said that Dryden imitated Chaucer's 'Good Parson' at his request.

He died on May 26, 1703, after months of failing health due to kidney disease, and was buried at St. Olave's, Hart Street, in the same vault as his wife and brother.

His Diary remained in the library of Magdalen College, Cambridge, until 1825, when it was printed in part by Lord Braybrooke. Various editions followed, more or less translated; the final and most complete being published in 1893 by Mr. Henry Wheatley, F.S.A.

It is not easy to read Pepys' character aright. On the one hand we have the panegyric of his worthy serious-minded friend Evelyn, who speaks of his 'great integrity,' and refers to him as 'universally beloved, hospitable, generous, learned in many things, skilled in music, a very great cherisher of learned men.' Then

there is the frank and ingenuous picture, presented by the Diarist himself, of a man, inquisitive, childish, clear-headed, vain, ambitious, quarrelsome; one who worked faithfully at his post, yet could abandon himself with zest to the pleasure of the moment. Brave in many respects; cowardly in others. In short, a strange mingling of good and indifferent qualities; sometimes contemptible, never entirely odious. But the zest for life, or rather for living, is his most remarkable characteristic. There is scarcely anything which does not interest him in the varied life of the time. It is not the main thoroughfares of life, but the side-issues and curious byways that enchain him. London is to him as a box of toys, and he is for ever examining her assorted treasures with the gleefulness of a child. Out-of-the-way taverns, new fashions in wearing apparel, the mechanism of a watch, the problems of physiology, cake feasts, shipbuilding, a new dish, an old book, a pretty face,—one and all never fail to attract him, and one and all he treats with the same childish inquisitiveness and naïve delight.

He reminds the reader sometimes of Hazlitt, sometimes of George Borrow, in the gusto and exuberant garrulity with which he writes. Yet it is not as a work of Art, but as a human document that his Diary must make its appeal.

One can see by a glance at the portrait of Pepys that we are dealing with a pleasure-loving, contented, good-hearted man of the world. What the portrait does not suggest is the mental versatility of the man; the complexity of his interests. He was no mere *bon viveur*. Fond of music always, he could play four instruments and compose songs. If a supper party awakens in him the anticipation of 'a glut of pleasure,' he records the

'great pleasure' with which he listens to the nightingale. All his delights are violent ones: his emotional sensibility knows no repose; it is always tremulous with some pleasure, whether it be the "infinite delight" of Boyle's Hydrostatics, or the "warming" comfort of mulled wine. Even the Naval stores are to him a great delight, and the sight of a pretty face provides matter for cheerful recollection during the remainder of the day. He is always respectable, as the average Londoner is, respectable in his vices, and in his virtues. Late supper parties and other "alarums and excursions" are duly expiated for by rigid church attendances. One cannot imagine him listening with comfort to the eloquence of Bunyan at Southwark. Mr. Gifford is more to his taste, who shows, 'like a wise man, that righteousness is a surer moral way of being rich than sin and villainy.' Yet there is no trace of hypocrisy about Pepys, and he is genuinely touched by simple piety, as in his account of Aunt James—'a poor, religious, well meaning, good soul, talking of nothing but God Almighty, and that with so much innocence that mightily pleased me.'

Somewhat circumspect when he starts his Diary, and with a conscience sensitive even to wandering thoughts about other women than his wife, it is manifest that in the circle where he moved, and the tone of the time being what it was, he should soon adopt the loose living of the day, until suddenly he awakes to the bitter upbraidings of his wife, to find himself plunged into an acrimonious domestic scandal.

It is hard to sum up Pepys more compendiously and happily than in the phrase of Coleridge—'a pollard man without the top . . . but on this account more broadly branching out from the upper trunk.'

After a period of silence the theatre opened once again its doors. The King and his Courtiers attended day after day, and Pepys describes the stage as "a thousand times better and more glorious than even heretofore — now all things civil, no rudeness anywhere." Presumably the latter criticism applied to the behaviour of the spectators: it certainly bore no application to many of the plays. If Pepys may be taken as a good specimen of the intelligent playgoer, Shakespeare was in no great favour at this time. Pepys has little to say, except by way of disparagement, for any of his plays. He admired greatly Betterton the Actor, and notices the attempts made to improve the character of the scenery. Plays at Court took place at night, but afternoon performances were still in vogue for the general public. Some of the new theatres, *e.g.* the Drury Lane Theatre, had skylights, but these were of scant value, as witness this entry (1664, June 1):—

> Before the play was done it fell such a storm of hail, that we in the middle of the pit were fain to rise, and all the house in a disorder.

Messenger boys were not yet invented to retain a place in a queue, but they had their equivalent:—

> To the Duke of York's playhouse at a little past twelve, to get a good place in the pit, and there setting a poor man to keep my place, I out and spent an hour at Martin's my bookseller's, and so back again, when I found the house quite full. But I had my place.

The witty, salacious comedies of the day were nearly always, in Pepys' view, 'mightily pleasant'; but for the more romantic order of play he has little to say.

1662.—To the King's Theatre, where we saw *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which I had never seen before, nor shall ever again, for it is the most insipid, ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life.

The following gives us an insight into the Pit manners of the day:—

1666-67.—To the King's House to *The Mayd's Tragedy*, but vexed all the while with two talking ladies and Sir Charles Sedley;[1] yet pleased to hear the discourse he being a stranger. And one of the ladies would and did sit with her mask on all through the play, and being exceedingly witty as ever I heard a woman, did talk most pleasantly with him; but was, I believe, a virtuous woman and of quality. . . . He was mighty witty, and she also making sport with him mighty inoffensively, that more pleasant rencontre I never heard. By that means lost the pleasure of the play wholly, to which both now and then Sir Charles Sedley's exceptions against both words and pronouncing were very pretty.

After the theatre came often supper at the Tavern. Two of the favourite resorts of Pepys—"The Dog" (where he refreshed himself before his famous defence) and "The Sun"—are mentioned by Herrick in his address to the shade of "Glorious Ben"—

Ah Ben!
Say how, or when
Shall we thy guests
Meet as these lyric feasts
Made at the 'Sun,'
The 'Dog,' the 'Triple Tunne'?
Where we such clusters had
As made us nobly wild not mad.
And yet such verse of thine
Outdid the meate, outdid the
frolic wine.

[1] A famous wit and man about Town.

Westminster, in Pepys' time, abounded in stalls of "booksellers, law stationers, sempstresses, and dealers in toys and small wares."

Wycherley, in his *Plain Dealer*, says—

> In Hall of Westminster
> Sleek sempstress vends amid the courts her wares.

The Hall was frequently visited by Pepys, who patronised the stalls—especially, we may conjecture, those tenanted by winsome-looking dealers. Adjoining the Hall were two Taverns called "Heaven" and "Hell." Pepys, with an eye, no doubt, to making his peace with both worlds, visited both.

Before the Restoration there were no houses in Piccadilly. The road took its name from Piccadilly Hall, a place of amusement at the top of the Haymarket. Soon after the accession of Charles, three large houses were built — Clarendon House, Berkeley House (Devonshire House stands now in its place), and Burlington House, afterwards famed as the home of the Royal Academy.

Chelsea reposed as a quiet country village with a thousand inhabitants. Cattle ranged, and "sportsmen wandered with dogs and guns over the site of the borough of Marylebone," and Islington was practically a solitude.

The City in those days was a home as well as a mart, and was not merely a place where men made their money and then left in haste and relief. The City abounded in residences — residences ample and imposing. Old Jewry and Basinghall Street gloried in such. Shaftesbury lived in Aldersgate Street, but most of the men of rank had migrated westward. The

neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn was a great place of fashion. Imposing buildings studded the Piazza of Covent Garden, and King's Square in "Soho Fields." Palatial residences — Southampton House, Bedford House, Montagu House—lined Holborn, looking northward not to the dreary wilderness of King's Cross and Pentonville, but towards pastures and cornfields.

Oxford Street, in those days, could boast of green hedges; and Regent Street was emphatically rural.

Covent Garden, then a dirty, strident market-place, could have been no pleasant neighbourhood for the fashionables who lived hard by.

Travelling was somewhat improved in Pepys' day, coaches with glass windows being introduced, also wicker and spring carriages. The Stage Coach started at the close of the Commonwealth, the charge being 1s. for every five miles. Their lightning speed may be gathered from the fact that they took twelve hours to accomplish fifty miles. But if travelling was better—though the betterment may not be very apparent unless we compare it with what had preceded—there is little to record of improvement in the condition of the roads. The London streets were in a terrible state. Heavy rain converted the public thoroughfares at short notice into quagmires. So great was the traffic on London Bridge that foot passengers were obliged for the most part to cross by water.

It is hard for us, in these days of wood pavements and anxious urban Councils, to realize the filthy condition of the streets and open spaces in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. No doubt the Great Fire

made a considerable difference in the character of the buildings and the width of the thoroughfares; but London was always outgrowing its administrative resources, and one might say no really serious and effective attempt at cleanliness and sanitation was made until quite modern times. In Pepys' time the gentry seemed to be comparatively indifferent to the matter. It made no difference to the aristocratic Holborn and Lincoln's Inn that the Fields, to which allusion has been made, served as the receptacle for all kinds of rubbish. St. James's Square was the dumping-ground of the refuse of Westminster. Covent Garden must have tried pretty severely the ears and noses of all within a mile's radius. When the weather was bad, noisome streams of garbage were carried along the over-full gutters, and made the slopes of Snow Hill and Ludgate Hill intolerable. Pavement of a kind there was, but it was notoriously bad. And this state of things continued, as we may gather from the gibes of Gay, and the satire of Swift, and the gruff comments of Johnson, right through the eighteenth century.

The curious painted signs outside the shops gave a quaint and picturesque appearance to the streets. The signs were not intended to satisfy the eye, but to serve the pedestrian as a means of ascertaining his whereabouts, for in those times the houses were not numbered—indeed, as Macaulay pertinently says, there would have been little advantage in numbering them, for very few of the coachmen, chairmen, porters, or mart boys could read. Marks were required, therefore, which the most ignorant could interpret. Night-time was not merely unpleasant, but even dangerous. Johnson, a hundred years later, found it desirable to

carry about with him a stout cudgel, though by his time the streets were lighted after a dim, blinking fashion. But until the end of Charles' reign the majority of the streets were in a Stygian gloom, to the delectation of all rogues and vagabonds. It was essential, therefore, if you valued your pocket or your life, to take a lantern with you. Lady Paulina Montague, who accompanied Pepys one evening, was terrified 'every step of the way,' and the not over-valiant Pepys felt as little comfortable as she, though he made great attempts to appear otherwise.

Probably it was far safer on the water. The main traffic went on the river, and that was the best way should business call you along the Strand, which was then a back passage facing the stables of the mansions overlooking the Thames. The Thames has been called the connecting link between the Court and City.

Christmas Day became once again a national festival, and we hear now of plum-puddings and mince-pies.

Twelfth Night was a rare occasion for jollification, and was as rigorously observed in Pepys' day as in Shakespeare's. The Diarist speaks of "a brave cake" and "a noble cake" on various festivals, and details some of the practical jokes he indulged in at that time. He also paid due deference to the festival of St. Valentine (presumably without the encouragement of Mrs. Pepys), and did not omit fritters on Shrove Tuesday.

St. George's Day, observed in Tudor times, had fallen into desuetude as a festival, but May Day was almost as gay and festive as in Chaucer's time; and Guy Fawkes' Day was most religiously observed. The

joys of the streets cannot have been augmented by the occasional bonfires and the games of football.

Funeral feasts, frowned upon by the Puritan, once more reasserted their popularity. It is related that ten maids in Westminster Hall wore white scarves as mourning for a young bachelor bookseller, and that Charles the Second went into purple mourning for his brother the Duke of Gloucester, purple being the royal mourning.

We may turn now from the general social aspects of the era to note those fateful occurrences, the Plague and the Fire.

The Plague.—It is hard for us to realize, in these days of enlightened therapeutics and scientific sanitation, the terrible and passionate significance of those simple words in the Litany, "From all Plague, Pestilence, and Famine . . . Good Lord deliver us"—words gabbled over by many of us with almost meaningless iteration, and yet breathed out with such desperate fervour and agonized apprehension in Tudor and Stuart times.

The Great Plague of 1665 was no isolated instance, it was one of a long series, and was the more terrible because of the scourges that had preceded, and because of the sultry and stifling climatic conditions prevailing.

The Great Epidemic of the Middle Ages had been "The Black Death," a kind of bubonic disease which overcame its victim with horrible rapidity, sometimes in a few minutes, sometimes in a couple of days; but agonizing and irremediable. This was in 1349. "The Sweating Sickness" of 1517 was far less disastrous, but it carried off large numbers of the poorer artizans, as

well as some of those better placed, as, for instance, the Latin Secretary of Cardinal Wolsey. It was followed by the Plague.

The Plague broke out again in 1603, 1625, and 1665.

In the first instance it took place about the time of the Queen's death, when London was crowded with sight-seers come to welcome James, and when, as Dekker says, "there was mirth in every one's face." Then slowly and furtively, but with deadly sureness, the Plague crept in, a veritable skeleton at the feast. "Paul grows thin for every man shrinks away," and the number of deaths ran up to nigh a thousand in the week. Naturally the charlatan reaped a golden harvest with his charms and preventives, till charlatan and victim alike were swept away. The City grew strangely quiet: wealthy citizens fled to the country, magistrates hurried away, and most of the clergy left their charges. Dekker reports the playhouse as empty, with doors locked, and the flag carried away. From 1603 to 1610 the Plague must have interfered greatly with the performance of Shakespeare's plays. Between 1610 and 1625 there was a cessation.

In 1625 the Plague came again, and once more the ghastly ritual is repeated. Those who can leave London flee, often only to spread infection into the country villages. The death-roll for the year reaches 63,000.

To a less extent Plague and Typhus flourished during the Civil War. Then there was a blessed lull, and the ghastly memories of the past gradually became fainter and fainter. When in the spring of 1665 there rose the first intimation of the grisly visitor, there had been sixteen years' respite—time enough for many to forget past horrors.

What determined the terrible severity of the Plague of 1665?

In the first place, an exceptionally long and hard frost had held the City in a tenacious grip throughout the winter. This was followed by a cold, cheerless spring, with bitter drying winds; and in June the soil was parched to an unusual depth. Soil of this kind is especially prepared for the virus of a Plague, and when a long drought is superadded, intensifying the miasmatic condition of an unsanitary City, dangers are, of course, infinitely increased.

As on a previous occasion, the Plague stole upon the City by insidious degrees; the prevalence of typhus masked the more terrible visitor, and a majority of these deaths are recorded. Then slowly but steadily the death-rate crept up. It was as if some monster were gradually and deliberately strangling the life out of the City. From west to east it spread, and Daniel Defoe, in his masterly *History of the Plague* (1722), has unrolled for us the various stages of the deadly drama.

At the time of the Plague, Defoe was only six years old; it is obvious, therefore, that beyond a few childish impressions he could not draw upon personal experience for his detailed and vivid account. But he had heard, no doubt from friends and relations, about the visitation, and in any case there were many books dealing with the event in his library upon which he could draw. For the rest, there was the literary genius of the man—a genius that achieved its effects by the apparent simplicity of its means.

A Journal of the Plague Year: being observations or memorials of the most remarkable occurrence as well public as private, which happened in London during the last visitation

in 1665, written by a Citizen who continued all the while in London, never made public before.

Here, at the outset, is struck the note of matter-of-fact realism, and never throughout the work is the illusion removed that you are reading the strictly veracious account of an eye-witness. One man only could have held us spell-bound with this deliberate matter-of-fact narrative—the man who made us believe in 'Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner.' *Robinson Crusoe* had been published three years before.

The Plague started in the western parish of St.-Giles-in-the-Fields, proceeding by stages to the City. The nearer it got to the heart of London, the greater was the panic, the more serious the dislocation of business and pleasure. "All the plays," says Defoe, "were forbid to act; the gaming tables, public dancing rooms, and music houses were shut up and suppressed . . . for the minds of the people were agitated with other things, and a kind of sadness and horror at these things sat upon the countenances even of the common people. Death was before the eyes of every one, and everybody began to think of their graves, not of mirth and diversion."

At the end of August Pepys met scarcely twenty people in the whole length of Lombard Street. The worst time of all was in the first fortnight of September. The City was like some vast charnel house; lonely streets which only reverberated to the hurried steps of some terrified fugitive, or to the measured tramp of the coffin-bearers; lanes, once gay with chaffing crowds, now silent and deserted, save where in a doorway crouched the figure of some poor creature in his death agony. The man who as yet was whole looked with

a shudder upon the houses marked with the fatal red cross, and the 'Lord have Mercy upon us' writ across the door.

A month or so before, the windows of the houses were bright with smiling faces which looked down on the wayfarer. Now the houses stood gaunt and still, save where a casement was flung suddenly up, and a white-faced woman made the air hideous with her mad screaming. What a ghastly scene of this character Defoe pictures in Tokenhouse Yard, Lothbury, where a woman looking out of window "gave three frightful screeches, and then cried, 'Oh! death, death, death!' in a most inimitable tone, and which struck me with horror and a chilliness in my very blood."

Scarce any emotion but panic-fear now touched dwellers among the Plague. "People had no curiosity now in any case, nor could anybody help one another." What paralyzed the authorities was the constant spreading of the infection by the "running of distempered people along the streets." So infectious were these people, that to touch them would place one in grave danger. Small surprise that even the Officers of Justice should give them a wide berth.

Where possible, however, the infected houses were closed, and the inmates forbidden to come out, on penalty of punishment. The miseries of those imprisoned were great, but the measure was absolutely essential, and should have been enforced earlier. Every man looked at his neighbour with suspicion and apprehension, not knowing whether he was speaking to a victim. Defoe has some fine graphic touches in this connection, which, whether circumstantially accurate or not, conjure up substantial truths.

A certain citizen who had lived safe and untouched till the month of September, when the weight of the distemper lay more in the city than it had done before, was mightily cheerful, and something too bold, as I think it was, in his talk of how secure he was, how cautious he had been, and how he had never come near any sick body. Says another citizen, a neighbour of his, to him one day, "Do not be too confident, Mr. ——; it is hard to say who is sick and who is well, for we see men alive and well to outward appearance one hour, and dead the next." "That is true," says the first man, for he was not a man presumptuously secure, but had escaped a long while, and men, as I said above, especially in the city, began to be over-easy upon that score. "That is true," says he; "I do not think myself secure, but I hope I have not been in company with any person that there has been any danger in." "No?" says his neighbour. "Was not you at the Bull Head Tavern in Gracechurch Street with Mr. —— the night before last?" "Yes," says the first, "I was; but there was nobody there that we had any reason to think dangerous." Upon which his neighbour said no more, being unwilling to surprise him; but this made him more inquisitive, and as his neighbour appeared backward, he was the more impatient, and in a kind of warmth says he aloud, "Why, he is not dead, is he?" Upon which his neighbour still was silent, but casting up his eyes and said something to himself; at which the first citizen turned pale, and said no more but this, "Then I am a dead man too," and went home immediately and sent for a neighbouring apothecary to give him something preventive, for he had not yet found himself ill; but the apothecary, opening his breast, fetched a sigh, and said no more but this, "Look up to God"; and the man died in a few hours.

The horrors of the time naturally impressed Pepys. "It struck me very deep," is the phrase he uses. But his comments are few and brief, and for anything like an adequate contemporary account one must go to Thomas Vincent's *God's Terrible Voice in the City* (1667), or Dr. Hodge's *Loimologia* (translated in 1720).

"Most of the rich," said the Rev. Thomas Vincent, "are now gone and the middle sort will not stay behind; but the poor are forced through poverty to stay and abide the storm. The very sinking fears they have had of the Plague hath brought the plague and death upon many souls, by the sight of a coffin in the streets have fallen into a shivering, and immediately the disease has assaulted them; and Sergeant Death hath arrested them, and clapt to the doors of their houses upon them, from whence they have come forth no more till they have been brought to their graves."

Again:

People fall as thick as the leaves in Autumn when they are shaken by a mighty wind.

It is said that a few high personages at Court who stayed in Town to look after the public business, were afterwards presented with silver cups by the King.

Then after the pestilence—the Fire.

There had been many earlier Fires, as there had been many earlier Plagues. Indeed, throughout early London history, the ravages of the twin destroyers were, perhaps, the most constant circumstance. Plague—Fire; Fire—Plague,—the two occur with awful regularity.

Mr. Heckethorn has compiled a list of the more important conflagrations from the year 764, when the Great Fire occurred, the charred embers of which are still found by excavators lying above the Roman relics. In 798, in 852, in 893, in 961, in 982, and in 1066, the cause was almost always the same—narrow streets and wooden houses.

Nor were things any better after the advent of William Rufus. The greater part of the City was burnt in 1077. In 1086, in 1092, in 1093, in 1102,

in 1131, in 1136 came further disasters, until in 1191 Fitz-Alwyn was persuaded to renew King Alfred's order, that houses should be built of stone or brick, with roofs of tiles or slates.

Perhaps the horrors of the Great Plague had numbed the public imagination. Certainly, London folk could have been forgiven for believing that they would be freed from either of their dread visitants for a wh[illegible] Be that as it may, the disaster of 1666 came unheralde[illegible] There was not even a lightning flash of warning prelude the fiery storm. Note how Pepys introduce[illegible] the episode:—

September 1.—My wife and I to Polichinelly but were there horribly frightened to see Young Killigrew come in with a great many more young sparks; but we hid ourselves, so as we think they did not see us.

Young Sparks!

September 2 (Lord's day).—Some of our maids sitting up late last night to get things ready against our feast to-day, Jane called us up about three in the morning to tell us of a great fire they saw in the City. So I rose and slipped on my night-gown and went to her window; and thought it to be on the back-side of Marke-lane at the farthest, but being unused to such fires as followed, I thought it far enough off; and so went to bed again and to sleep.

To bed again and to sleep!

By morning, the Diarist was able to gain a clearer idea of the immensity of the fire. But still he seems to have had no idea of a visitation which was to entail the destruction of five-sixths of the City within the walls, as well as a great space beyond. His first guess as to the place of origin had been fairly accurate. The fire

began at the house of the King's baker, who had a shop in Pudding Lane, close by Fish Street Hill. Wren's Monument, of course, marks the spot to-day.

The first district devastated was Lower Thames Street, where the houses happened to be chiefly composed of timber, lath and plaster. The fire had reached this spot when the irrepressible Jane finally persuaded Pepys that it would be worth while strolling towards the City in order to see what was happening.

> So I made myself ready presently and walked to the Tower, and there got up upon one of the high places.

Once in the neighbourhood of the conflagration, even the easy-going Samuel was impressed. He took note of the men who flung their household goods into the lighters upon the river; of the poor folk who stayed by hearth and home until the very fire touched them and drove them to the boats; even of "the poor pigeons," who were "loth to leave their houses but hovered about the windows and balconys, until they burned their wings and fell down."

If Pepys was slow to realize the disastrous nature of the fire, many other Londoners were even slower. No organized effort was made to stay the burning, every one being fully occupied in removing their goods first to a neighbouring house and then farther on and farther on still, until in most cases the all-embracing flames had their way at last. It was not until after Pepys had taken boat for White Hall and reported to the King and the Duke of York, that the Diarist's obviously sensible suggestion—to pull down houses before the fire—was adopted. However, probably nothing would have been of real avail. The houses were too "full of matter for burning, as pitch and tar, in Thames Street;

and warehouses of oyle, and wines and brandy and other things."

By this time it was twelve o'clock and dinner time. Directly the meal was over, Pepys and his friend Moone walked into the City, to find the streets packed with horses and carts laden with goods "ready to run over one another and removing goods from one burned house to another. They now removing out of Canning Street (which received goods in the morning) into Lumbard Street and further."

From that time, the disaster increased in immensity. When Pepys, his wife and a few friends met in St. James' Park in the afternoon and went on to the river, it was easy enough to see why so little could be done to stop the progress of the fire. "All over the Thames, with one's faces in the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of fire-drops." By night-tide the thing had become "a most horrid, malicious, bloody flame."

We staid till, it being darkish, we saw the fire as only one entire arch of fire from this to the other side the bridge, and in a bow up the hill for an arch of above a mile long. It made me weep to see it. The churches, houses and all on fire, and flaming at once; and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking of houses at their ruine. So home with a sad heart.

September 3. — About four o'clock in the morning, my Lady Batten sent me a cart to carry away all my money and plate and best things to Sir W. Rider's at Bednall-greene.

During the whole of the 4th of September the fire blazed on. "Now begins the practice of blowing up houses in Tower Street, those next the Tower, which at first did frighten people more than anything." On the 5th, the destruction had reached Barking Church,

"which is the bottom of our lane." So Pepys collected his £2350 worth of gold-pieces; and carried his good dame away to Woolwich. As it turned out, the precaution was unnecessary, for at the porch of Barking Church the flames were stayed.

So much for East London.

Unfortunately, the City, and the district reaching towards Westminster were faring even worse. The Exchange was in ruins, Cheapside and Newgate Market all burned. Throughout the day and night of the 6th of September, the same tale of utter desolation was being told everywhere. On the 7th the progress of the fire had been stayed, and Pepys ventured to explore as far as the Strand.

A miserable sight of Paul's Church, with all the roofs fallen, and the body of the quire fallen into St. Fayth's; Paul's School also, Ludgate and Fleet-street. My father's house, and the church and a good part of the Temple, all in ruins.

The Great Fire of London had entailed a loss of upwards of ten millions sterling. Four City gates, eighty-nine Churches, four hundred Streets, and thirteen thousand two hundred Houses were destroyed. There was nothing for it but to rebuild the town upon the hot ashes.

The opportunity made the man—Christopher Wren.

Strangely enough, the creator of modern London—the man who has done most to give London its present architectural character—was in early manhood no more than a dabbler in the art in which he became famous.

Born on October 20, 1632, Christopher Wren be-

longed to a family with strong Royalist sympathies. When his father, Dr. Wren, was deprived of his Rectory of East Knoyle in Wiltshire in 1647, young Wren seems to have stayed in London as assistant of the famous physician, Sir Charles Scarborough. His chief work was to prepare and dissect anatomical specimens. For years after, Wren devoted himself to pure science, his principal post being the Professorship of Astronomy at Gresham College, to which he was appointed in 1657. The rough English draft of Wren's inaugural Latin Address has been preserved. It ends with a quaint panegyric on the City, which is quoted by Miss Lena Milman. After recounting the benefits conferred on London by each planet in turn, Wren goes on—

> Lastly the Moon, the Lady of the Waters, seems amorously to court this Place
>
> Atque urbem magis omnibus unam
> Posthabita coluisse Delo :
>
> For to what City does she invite the Ocean so far in Land as here? Communicating by the Thames whatever the Banks of Maragnon or Indus can produce and at the Reflux warming the frigid Zones with our Cloth. . . . And now since Navigation brings in both Wealth, Splendour, Politeness, and Learning, what greater Happiness can I wish to Londoners than that they may continually deserve to be deemed as formerly, the great Navigators of the World, that they may always be the Masters of the Sea and that London may be an Alexandria, the established residence of Mathematical Arts?

Until 1666, Christopher Wren continued to regard pure science as his appointed work in life. Indeed, if it had not been for his fame as an architect Wren would doubtless have been remembered for his services in founding the Royal Society. While at Oxford the

young scientist had been an energetic member of Robert Boyle's scientific and philosophical society. During Wren's tenure of the Gresham professorship of Astronomy, these meetings were held at the College. In 1662, Charles II. was pleased to grant a charter of incorporation to "The President, Council, and Fellowship of the Royal Society, for improving National Knowledge." This was two years after the famous meeting in Wren's room at Gresham College, when it was first proposed to found a Philosophical Society for the promotion of Physico-Mathematical Experimental Learning on the lines of the informal gatherings in Oxford and London. In 1661 Wren had left London for Oxford, having been appointed to the Savillian Chair of Astronomy.

Already the young scientist's interest in the art of architecture had been noticed, and in 1662 Wren was asked to furnish a design for the Theatre which Archbishop Sheldon wished to present to Oxford University. Doubtless it was the knowledge of this, combined with Wren's reputation as a geometrician, which led the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's to commission Wren to prepare a survey of the Cathedral. The sacred building was in a strange plight. Part of the church had been converted into a barracks for dragoons, and had provided stabling for their horses during the reign of Puritanism. The stately portico had been converted into shops for seamstresses. Earlier still, the great nave—Paul's Walk—had been regarded as a meeting-place where any knave or fool could meet for chatter. The famous fourth chapter of *The Gul's Horn-Booke* will occur to every one, with its lively picture of "How a Gallant should behave himselfe in Powles walkes."

The task which Christopher Wren set himself was to endow the Gothic pile with the vesture of its old-time sanctity. Before any headway could be made towards carrying out the recommendations contained in the elaborate report, however, the Great Plague overtook London. Wren chose to leave England and live in Paris, until the earlier conditions in his own country were restored. He was still known as "The Astronomy Professor," but during the visits to the French capital the essential features of Wren's architectural style were developed.

A letter from Christopher Wren to his friend Dr. Bateman proves clearly what a great part the Palace of the Louvre must have played in this respect.

"I have busied myself," writes Wren, "in surveying the most esteemed Fabricks of Paris and the Country round: the Louvre for a while was my daily object, where no less than a thousand Hands are constantly employed in the Works, some in laying mighty Foundations, some in raising the Stories, Columns, Entablements etc., with vast Stones by great and useful Engines; others in Carving, Inlaying of Marbles, Plaistering, Painting, Gilding, etc., which altogether make a School of Architecture the best, probably of this day in Europe."

It was with the memory of Perrault's great building ever before him that Wren came to the task of rebuilding the Cathedral Church of St. Paul after the Great Fire.

It is, however, typical of the philosophic breadth of vision of Wren that he was by no means content to merely suggest the building of a new St. Paul's. Both Evelyn and Wren set to work upon plans for the rebuilding of a new London directly the extent of the

damage was realized. Evelyn mentions that Wren was the quicker in placing a scheme before Charles II.

The main features of Wren's plan were the two great streets, ninety feet wide. One led from the site of the old Gothic Cathedral to the Tower, opening into two piazzas (after the Italian fashion) on the way. The other led to the Royal Exchange. All the halls of the City Companies were to be centred around the Guild Hall. Finally, a great quay was to be constructed from the Tower to Blackfriars. Since the two great thoroughfares were to converge upon the new Cathedral, St. Paul's was to be the central point in New London.

While the work of clearing the streets of rubbish was in progress, Wren returned to Oxford and resumed his work as Savillian Professor of Astronomy. When, however, the King was persuaded to accept his advice and build a new Cathedral rather than mend the old one, he came once more to London.

In 1669 Wren became Surveyor-General and Principal Architect for "repairing the whole City, the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, all the parochial Churches with other publick Structures."

A wooden model of the new Cathedral—large enough for two people to stand inside—was prepared for the King's use. It can still be seen,[1] and suggests that Wren's own predilection was for the form of a Great Cross surmounted by a dome. Finally, sacerdotal and other objections led to the formulation of a design with a lengthy nave and choir of the Gothic type, which was finally accepted and, with many modifications, used.

But there were many difficulties to be overcome

[1] Victoria and Albert Museum.

first. The great central tower of Old St. Paul's still carried its broken form skywards to a height of two hundred feet. Blasting operations had to be devised and battering rams constructed. Forty-seven thousand loads of rubbish had to be carted away before any progress could be made. Borings had to be made through the "Pot-earth" and down to the "natural hard clay which lies under the City." Wren was building "for Eternity."

At length the massive walls began to rise above the ground level. On December 2, 1697, the choir was opened for public worship—the day being that of National Thanksgiving for the Peace of Ryswick.

Still the work went on. Wren's enemies did their best to hamper and delay, but in 1710, save for some minor decoration, the Cathedral was completed.

Unfortunately, Wren's scheme for the rebuilding of London upon a definite plan fared less well. Lack of sufficient funds, the innate conservatism of the citizens of London, and the anxiety to "get something done," proved obstacles which even Wren's level-headed enthusiasm could not overcome. Nevertheless, by means of his wonderful series of City churches, the architect of St. Paul's left almost as definite an impression upon London as if he had, in truth, designed the whole.

Imagine London without the steeples of St. Bride's, Fleet Street; of St. Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside; and the spire of St. Margaret Pattens—to mention only three of the fifty churches which Wren rebuilt after the Fire. Seventeen have since been taken down, but the rest form as enduring a monument to the memory of Christopher Wren as St. Paul's itself.

Wren died on February 25, 1723. It had been his custom to drive to the Cathedral once a year, and

sit for a while within the great pile. After one of these visits he returned to his home at Hampton Court. A short while after he was found by his servant dead in his chair. He had passed away in his sleep. The body was laid in the crypt of St. Paul's.

Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.

Sorrow, sickness, and sudden death have loomed largely in this chapter. I am conscious that the hearty jollity, the determination to enjoy the things of the senses, which run like dominant themes through the life-story of Samuel Pepys, are wanted to complete the picture of London in the years following the Restoration.

Of the fair but frail beauties, "whom the pleasure of God and their virtue"—to use a phrase of Lord Arlington—had raised to the proud position of King's mistresses, I shall say nothing. It is sufficient to name Lucy Walters, "brown, beautiful, bold, but insipid"; Barbara Villiers (Duchess of Cleveland), and "La Belle Stewart." Their gay doings are to be found in the Memoirs of their time, and their bright glances live yet in the glowing canvases of Lely, who, as Pope put it—

On animated canvas stole
The sleepy eye, that spoke the melting soul.

But of "Pretty, witty Nell" a few sentences must be written. Nell Gwynne made her first appeal to the fancy of the Town as an orange girl. Rochester tells how—

First the basket her fair arm did suit,
Laden with pippins and Hesperian fruit.

Later, came the appearances upon the stage at

the King's Theatre in Drury Lane, including that in James Howard's *The English Monsieur*, which Pepys found such a "mighty, pretty play, very witty and pleasant," and the even more famous performance which preluded the introduction of Pepys to the fascinating Nelly.

At this time Nell Gwynne was still living in Drury Lane, though at the fashionable (Covent Garden) end. Under date May 1, 1667, the year after the fire, Pepys writes as follows :—

> To Westminster; in the way meeting many milk-maids with their garlands upon their pails, dancing with a fiddler before them, and saw pretty Nelly standing at her lodgings' door in Drury-lane in her smock sleeves and bodice, looking upon one: she seemed a mighty pretty creature.

It was not until 1669 that Nell Gwynne's charms attracted the attention of Charles II. A son was born in the spring of 1670, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Soon after Nell moved to Pall Mall, Evelyn recording how he saw the King standing on the green walk under her garden wall, and talking to her as she looked out from the raised terrace which now forms part of the enclosure of Marlborough House.

The position which the gay spirited actress held seems to have been a sufficiently lucrative one, for the accounts of her bankers show that she died possessed of 14,443 ounces of plate, valued at no less than £3791 : 5 : 9. Of course there were debts. But, after all, the capacity to borrow is in itself a very fair substitute for riches—provided payment is not expected on this side of the grave.

Nell Gwynne banked at Child's. The "Marygold" Tavern, next door to the "Noisy Devil" Tavern in

Fleet Street, opposite Temple Bar, had been taken by a goldsmith, named Wheeler, in 1625. Wheeler's business of banker and goldsmith was inherited by Child, the sign of the firm being the marigold, the address Temple Bar. Indeed, for many years Child's Bank used the room in the centre of Wren's Arch as a strong-room. The name of Nell Gwynne appears on the first page of the firm's oldest ledger. With the picture of Nelly alighting at her banker's door, in the heyday of her charm and fortune, we may take our leave of the London of Pepys and Wren—a London of careless gaiety and picturesque folly, embroidered upon a dark background of disease and suffering.

CHAPTER XI

THE LONDON OF ADDISON AND POPE

You that delight in wit and mirth
  And love to hear such news,
As comes from all parts of the earth,
  Dutch, Danes, and Turks and Jews;
I'll send ye to a rendezvous
  Where it is smoking new:
Go, hear it at a Coffee House,
  It cannot but be true.

THOMAS JORDAN (1675).

THE characteristics of an Age are more faithfully reflected in its imaginative literature than in its formal histories and chronicles. Pope reflects the hard brilliance, the somewhat facile optimism of his generation in much the same way as Tennyson mirrors in his work the religious perplexities and social ideals of Victorian England. And Addison is the Thackeray of his Age, in his pictures of the tastes, the fashions, and the follies of the "Town."

We are approaching now the existence in London of a definite literary class. The poet, the dramatist of the Ages preceding, depended for his livelihood upon a Patron.

Patronage still exists, and Pope made his fortune by what has been called 'a kind of joint-stock patronage,' where the aristocratic patron found it convenient to

induce his friends to subscribe towards the maintenance of the poet. But, the older system was dying out.

At first the poet or the pamphleteer attaches himself to some influential Minister, using his pen on behalf of this gentleman's cause. Afterwards, when the Minister found he could get his work done more cheaply than by hiring men of taste, the literary man gets thrown upon the suffrages of a public then rising into existence.

The Coffee-house, and later the Clubs, were centres around which radiated the thoughtful and intelligent. What Addison did to systematize the fluctuating sentiments and opinions of these will be seen hereafter. It is sufficient to note here that politicians, lawyers, clergymen, literary men, met at these places and discussed the problems of the hour. Thus the author and his public were forced into intimate proximity. If you admired a man's writings, you hastened to his Coffee-house, where you might hear him holding forth to his own special friends. Perhaps you brought with you a companion. And thus the circle of discipleship grew.

What of the Coffee-house, which plays so important a share in the Life of the day?

It arose in this fashion.

The Coffee-house was the lineal descendant of the barber's shops (monastic or lay), the university dining and debating halls, and the taverns of the Middle Ages. Here had been the home of the idea; the "baiting-place of wit," if the shades of Sidney will forgive the phrase; the forge where the rough thought was welded into policy. Here the political philosopher could hob-nob with the demagogue—as in the days when Jack Cade and his rebel crew took possession of the "Whyt

Harte," in Whyt Harte-yard, Southwark, on July 1, 1450. The inn boasted the largest sign-board in London except the "Castle," in Fleet Street, so Cade's followers found their leader readily enough. The natural disinclination on the part of the citizen of the town to welcome the firebrand explains Cade's speech to his rebel friends :—

> Will you needs be hanged with your pardons about your necks? Hath my sword therefore broke through London Gates, that you should leave me at the "Whyt Harte" in Southwark?

It will be remembered that two days of experience of Jack Cade and his ways were sufficient to prove to the citizens of London that they would have been wiser to have left the rebel on the south side of London Bridge.

Nor was this all. In earlier times, not a few notable taverns had been well-known marrying houses. The "Cock" and the "Hand and Pen," near old Fleet Bridge, were two inns provided with chapels and chaplains ready to solemnize a marriage at any time of the day or night.

Coffee was introduced into London in 1657 by a Turkish merchant, who set up his coffee-house in Lombard Street, with a portrait of himself as a Sign over the door. "That excellent, and by all physicians approved, China drink . . . Tea" was to be had, as well as "Cophee," but the former was a very expensive luxury as yet, and was regarded, much as Tobacco was on its introduction, as a medicine. Tea, or Tee, was pronounced as *Tay*. Pope refers to—

> . . . Gentle Anna, whom three realms obey,
> Does sometimes counsel take, and sometimes Tea.

Coffee-houses now multiplied rapidly, and soon each house had its distinctive clientèle—lawyers favouring one, politicians another, and so forth. The famous "Wills's" in Covent Garden (the west corner of Bow Street) was patronized by Pepys and Dryden. This place was termed the "Wits' Coffee House." It was a home for scandal and lampoons. Dryden was an agreeable, good-natured, somewhat self-opinionated man. He enjoyed a great reputation as a conversationalist, in much the same way as did Addison who succeeded him.

After 1710 the reputation of "Wills's," as a resort of wits, flagged. About 1712 "Button," a servant of Addison, was established in a new Coffee-house to which his master resorted. Many of them sold tea or coffee, but greater sobriety was observed at the coffee-houses than at the tavern.

The Host of the Coffee-house hears all the town gossip, and to him naturally the visitor turns upon his entrance: "What news have you, Master?"

Here is a contemporary picture of West End life (1722):—

> We rise at nine, and those that frequent great men's levées found entertainment at them till eleven; or, as in Holland, go to tea tables. About twelve the beau monde assembles in several coffee- or chocolate-houses, the best of which are the "Cocoa Tree" and "White's" Chocolate-houses, "St. James's," "The Smyrna," ... Coffee-houses, and all these so near to one another that in less than an hour you see the company of them all. We are carried to these places in chairs, which are here very cheap, a guinea a week, or one shilling per hour, and your chairman serves you as porter to run on errands. . . . If it is fine weather we take a turn in the Park till two, when we go to dinner. . . . The general way here is to make a party at the Coffee-house to

go to dine at the Tavern, where we sit till six, when we go to the play, unless you are invited to the table of some great man. After the play, the best company generally go to "Tom's" and "Wills's" Coffee-houses near adjoining, where there is playing at picquet and the best of conversation till midnight.

Swift also came to 'Buttons.' And one evening, Addison and his friends being present, "the mad Doctor," as he was called, accosted a countryman who had just come in. "Excuse me, Sir, have you ever seen such good weather in this world?" "Yes, Sir," was the wondering reply, "Thank God, I have seen many good days." "That is more than I can say," retorted Swift, "I cannot remember any weather which was neither too hot, too wet, nor too dry; but God Almighty manages to arrange it so that it all comes to the same thing at the end of the year."

Politicians met here, but they had little circles or Clubs of their own, and these met often in taverns. The Tory "October Club" met in a tavern at Westminster; the Whig "Kitcat" Club in a Strand tavern.[1]

Theologians and Scientists did not disdain the Coffee-house. Sir Isaac Newton repaired of an evening to the "Grecian"; and Laurence Sterne preached lay-sermons there—probably more interesting than his formal discourses. On one occasion, it is said, he gave out as his text: "It is better to go into the house of mourning than into the house of feasting," and continued: "I dispute that!" Which we may well believe.

Here is a handbill which extolled the virtue of coffee :—

[1] The "Cat and Fiddle," the shop of a pastry-cook named Christopher Kat.

A simple, innocent thing, and makes the heart lightsome; it is good against sore eyes, and the better if you hold your head over it and take in the steam that way. It is good for a cough. It is excellent to prevent and cure the dropsy, gout, and scurvy. . . . It keeps the skin white and clear.

The satirists of the day did not spare coffee. One of them "calls on Ben Jonson's manly ghost, and the noble phantoms of Beaumont and Fletcher, who drank pure nectar, with 'rich canary, ennobled,' while these coffee men, these 'sons of nought' gave up the pure blood of the grape for a filthy drink—'syrup of soot, essence of old shoes.'

A good number objected to the smell of this new beverage. In December, 1657, some of the burghers complain of a barber, Farr, who sold coffee and offended them by the 'stink' while it was being manufactured. But the popularity of the drink grew apace, despite these objections.

The influence of the Coffee-house as a centre for politics is well illustrated by the attempt of Charles to suppress them in 1675, "because the multitude of Coffee-houses lately set up and kept within this Kingdom, and the great resort of the idle and dissipated persons in them, have produced very evil and dangerous effects, whilst they especially tended to spread disunion, and to tempt tradespeople to neglect their business, and that this idle waste of time and money was becoming an injury to the commonwealth." But the regulation was not enforced, so strong was the feeling against it.

The Coffee-house of the time was, as we see, the school of wit and dialectic. What the Tavern had been to the sixteenth century, the Coffee-house was to the seventeenth and eighteenth. It reached the height of

its popularity in the eighteenth, and before its close had passed into practical oblivion.

At one time, it is said, there were no less than three thousand Coffee-houses in London; and these resorts were for all sorts and conditions of men. Each Profession, almost each business, had its particular rendezvous. In the better class smoking was allowed; but conversation was compulsory. You paid your twopence for a cup of coffee or tea, and then chatted to a neighbour.

The well-known writers of the day congregated at these places and talked to their friends—not unfrequently at them. It was at a Coffee-house that Pope found Dryden; and here it was that Addison discoursed to a select circle; and Johnson delivered many of his sententious periods.

Defoe declared that:—

> The best company (after the play) generally go to 'Tom's' or "Wills's" Coffee-houses, near adjoining, where there is playing at picquet and the best of conversation till midnight. According to a contemporary, a man is sooner asked about his Coffee-house than about his Lodgings. . . . They smoak Tobacco, game, and read papers of intelligence; here they treat of matters of state, make Leagues with Foreign Princes, break them again, and transact affairs of the last consequence to the whole world.

Snuff-taking was a favourite practice at this time. It came in towards the end of the sixteenth century, and enjoyed a great vogue during the eighteenth. Women took snuff freely; and the modish lady of the day never travelled without her box. . . . Women of the poorer classes, whom one may see nowadays with a clay pipe, refreshed themselves with snuff. It was an Age of Snuff: tobacco took a second place.

The *Tatler* recommended every one to prepare himself before entering the Coffee-house, with 'three dishes of bohea'; and two pinches of snuff completed the prescription—thus to 'purge his brains.'

Here is the *Spectator* discussing among the Coffee-house politicians his own treatment of political questions :—

I was yesterday in a Coffee-house not far from the Royal Exchange, where I observed three Persons in close Conference over a Pipe of Tobacco; upon which, having filled one for my own Use, I lighted it at a little Wax-Candle that stood before them; and after having thrown in two or three Whiffs amongst them, sat down and made one of the Company. I need not tell my Reader that lighting a Man's Pipe at the same Candle is looked upon among Brother-smokers as an Overture to Conversation and Friendship. As we here laid our Heads together in a very amicable manner, being intrenched under a Cloud of our own raising, I took up the last *Spectator*, and casting my Eye over it, the *Spectator*, says I, is very witty to-day; upon which a lusty lethargick old Gentleman, who sat at the Upper-end of the table, having gradually blown out of his Mouth a great deal of Smoke, which he had been collecting for some time before, Ay, says he, more witty than wise, I am afraid. His Neighbour, who sat at his right Hand, immediately coloured, and being an angry Politician, laid down his Pipe with so much Wrath that he broke it in the Middle, and by that Means furnished me with a Tobacco stopper. I took it up very sedately, and looking him full in the face, made use of it from time to time all the while he was speaking: This Fellow, says he, can't for his Life keep out of Politiks. Do you see how he abuses four great Men here? I fixed my Eye very attentively on the Paper, and asked him if he meant those who were represented by Asterisks. Asterisks, says he, do you call them? they are all of them Stars. He might as well have put Garters to 'em. Then pray do not mind the two or three next Lines: Ch-rch and P-dd-ng in the same Sentence! Our Clergy are very much beholden to him.

Upon this the third Gentleman, who was of a mild Disposition, and, as I found, a Whig at Heart, desired him not to be too severe upon the *Spectator* neither; For, says he, you find he is very cautious of giving Offence, and has therefore put two Dashes into his Pudding. A Fig for his Dash, says the angry Politician. In his next Sentence he gives a plain Inuendo, that our Posterity will be in a sweet P-ckle. What does the Fool mean by his Pickle? Why does he not write it at length, if he means honestly? I have read over the whole Sentence, says I; but I look upon the Parenthesis in the Belly of it to be the most dangerous Part, and as full of Insinuations as it can hold. . . .

At my leaving the Coffee-house, I could not forbear reflecting with myself upon that gross Tribe of Fools who may be termed the Over-wise, and upon the Difficulty of writing anything in this censorious Age, which a weak Head may not construe into private Satire and personal Reflexion.

So opinions were formed and circulated. But potent as were the semi-public meetings in the tavern and the Coffee-house for the distribution of news and opinions, they were insufficient for the general needs. A debating agency of an even more public sort was required. During the seventeenth century London folk came slowly to understand that none was more promising than the newspaper, "an open Forum where all mortals vent their opinion, state their grievance; a Forum free to every citizen who has three fingers and a smattering of grammar," as Carlyle put it in an oft-quoted passage.

The earliest London "newspapers" were the "Corantos," which were mainly concerned with foreign affairs. Indeed, as Mr. J. R. Williams points out in his *History of English Journalism*, the first newspaper circulating in London was in reality a news book. It was the *Mercurius Gallobelgicus*, a bound book,

written in Latin and printed at Cologne. It was concerned with the story of the German Wars. The first number, a thick quarto octavo of 625 pages, was published in March 1594, and contained a chronicle of events from 1588. It was the *Mercurius Gallo-belgicus*, by the way, which suggested the title of many later London periodicals.

In 1622 came a weekly pamphlet—translated from the Dutch, and issued by two London booksellers, Thomas Archer and Nicholas Bourne. Its purpose is sufficiently indicated by the general title of the second number which runs :—

> The 23 of May. Weekely Newes from Italy, Germanie, Hungaria, Bohemia, the Palatinate, France, and the low Countries, etc.

The *Weekely Newes* was the precursor of many similar pamphlets. These "Corantos" were followed by a series of sheets concerned with the dissemination of news, dictated for the most part by the needs of one or other of the great political parties. When it is added that the first advertisement appeared in the *Mercurius Britannicus* Coranto on February 1, 1625, it will be seen that the modern newspaper was already in a fair way towards establishment. It is interesting to note that the first traders to realize the advantage of the new method of selling their goods were the booksellers.

Still the slow evolution went on. The years of the Long Parliament saw the coming and going of many news sheets, *Mercury* and *Diurnal* being the titles generally preferred.

Unfortunately the reputation of the writers of the various pamphlets did not progress so rapidly as the popularity of the institution they were seeking to found.

"Liar" was the term ordinarily applied to the newspaper writer. When a critic permitted himself a little more latitude, the results were startling. Here is the view of a Royalist upon the press of his day :—

> They call him a Mercury, but he becomes the Epithet like a little negro mounted on the elephant, just such another blot rampant. He defames a good title as much as most of our modern noblemen, those Wens of greatness, the body politics most peccant humours blistered into Lords. To call him an historian is to knight a mandrake, 'tis to view him through a perspective, and by that glass hyperbole to give the reputation of an engineer to a maker of mouse-traps.

Nor were individuals treated with any more courtesy. About this time, 1647, Samuel Pecke was the leading London newsmonger. "A bald-headed buzzard" is one choice phrase. "A tall, thin-faced fellow," continues the description, "with a Hawk's nose, a meagre countenance, and long runnagate legs, constant in nothing but wenching, lying, and drinking."

Nevertheless, Pecke was the means of advancing Journalism a very definite step. After 1643 the *Perfect Diurnal* became recognized as his personal property.

The purloining of newspaper titles being no longer customary, the identification of a particular sheet with a definite political or social philosophy was possible. The threefold function of a modern newspaper—as news collector, advertisement distributor, and political opinions maker—was established.

A further step was made in 1665, when the *Oxford Gazette* was established. It became the *London Gazette*, upon the return of the Court to the metropolis after the Great Plague, and as such exists to-day. Finally, in 1695, the censorship of the press was abolished, and the publication of a modern newspaper became possible.

It was on March 1, 1711, that Addison issued his periodical, the *Spectator*, which sought to do for art, literature, and manner, what the daily news sheet was doing for politics and current events. Both in conception and execution the *Spectator* justified the high eulogy which Macaulay was able to pass upon its first editor.

Speaking of the statue set up to Addison in Westminster Abbey, Macaulay has said, "Such a mark of national respect was due to the unsullied statesman, to the accomplished scholar, to the man of pure English eloquence, to the consummate painter of life and manners. It was due, above all, to the great satirist who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it; who, without inflicting a wound, effected a great social reform, and who reconciled wit with virtue after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy and virtue by fanaticism."

The eulogy is remarkable, but few would deny its essential justice.

Long after Feudalism had perished as a political force it lingered on as a social and literary influence. Intensely individualistic as was the spirit of the Renascence, it left untouched by its anti-feudal tendencies many old customs. Sentiment at the Restoration favoured the continuance and vitality of these survivals—ancient habits of thought and life. And looking at the life of the period we can detect two contrary currents of opinion, the one fed by Puritanism, the other by Feudalism. At a later period the trends of thought which we designate Liberalism and Conservatism arose from these. But there have always existed ever since mediæval times the two camps. Neither has conquered its enemy. Each has modified the other. And the greatest Masters of our Literature have been those who have wrung from

both their measure of fruitfulness. The best instincts of the Nation had recoiled alike from the narrow rigidity of the Puritan Ideal and the shallow self-indulgence of the Restoration hedonists. In religious matters they had found a *viâ mediâ*; they now sought one in their social and political life. In this work of reconciliation it is hard to overestimate the influence of Joseph Addison.

Born May 1, 1672, he went to school at the Charterhouse, leaving that in 1687 for Queen's College, Oxford. Later on he was associated with Magdalen College; and the picturesque walk by the Cherwell, with its formal line of elm-trees and air of serene repose, remains as a reminder of the quiet, studious scholar. His scholastic reputation became considerable, and Johnson warmly praised his Latin Poem.

The star of Congreve was rising, that of Dryden declining, at this time; and Congreve, it is said, introduced Addison to Montague, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Addison wrote a poem to the King in 1695, and dedicated a Latin Poem on the Peace of Ryswick (1697) to Montague himself. This was pleasantly acknowledged by a pension of £300 obtained for the youthful Poet by Montague. This enabled him to travel abroad and enrich his education. From the account of his wanderings through France and Italy, it is clear that he is more interested in classic associations than in scenic beauties, and that he views Catholic practices with an impatience and austerity almost Miltonic. Clearly this cultured Loyalist has something of the Puritan in his constitution. On his return to England he remained for a considerable time without employment, but when the Whigs came into favour Addison's lot became happier. Then came a period of

preferments and of official poetry which need not concern us here. His poetry was never great at any time, though graceful, scholarly, and facile. He had the gift of friendship, and by his social qualities attracted towards himself many illustrious men, very divergent in temperament. Among them were Steele and Swift. Of Swift he thought very highly, and to him dedicated a copy of his *Italian Travels* :—

To the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of his Age.

Pope has declared that Addison spent much of his time at Coffee-houses with his friends, a habit which Pope himself found injurious to health. It is probable that Addison's social proclivities lead him into habits of intemperance, which probably shortened his life. But there is no doubt that "Canary Wine and Barbadoes water" frequently unlocked a flood of rich eloquence and fine suggestion. One recalls the witty saying of Coleridge, that 'some men are like musical glasses ; you only get the finest tones from them when they are wet.'

He was an excellent talker ; scarcely an effective conversationalist. He belonged to the genus of Coleridge and Carlyle rather than that of Hazlitt or Macaulay.

In 1708 he entered Parliament, first as member for Lostwithiel, after for Malmesbury, and held the latter seat for the period of his life. With the fall of the Whigs, however, he lost office, and a period of comparative poverty followed. He had a retirement near Chelsea, which had once belonged to Nell Gwynne; there it was that Swift dined with him, and from here he would walk across the fields to Holland House, then occupied by Lady Warwick.

Steele and Addison were educated at the same

school, and were friends at Oxford. But while Addison shaped as the "good little boy," Steele's career suggested a collegiate Harry Sandford. Throughout life he reminds one rather of Thomas Nash or Robert Greene, those famous Elizabethan Bohemians, for, like them, 'sinning and repenting,' he spent most of his days. But he is a shade less impetuous than those worthies, and the puritan element which showed up unexpectedly in Greene was very clearly discernible in Steele's work. A fine portrait is given of him in *Esmond*.

In April 1709 Steele started the *Tatler*. Addison contributed a few papers to the earlier numbers, but not till the eighty-first number did he become a frequent contributor.

Of Addison's help Steele remarked, "When I had once called him in I could not subsist without dependence on him."

The *Tatler* started by detailing news mingled with essays and stories and dramatic criticism. It was through the influence of Addison that the Essay became the most important constituent.

January 2, 1711, saw the death of the *Tatler*, and the following March 1 the birth of the *Spectator*. It ran for 555 numbers, continuing until December 6, 1712. The essay which had proved so great a success in the *Tatler* became the one ingredient of the *Spectator*. The sobriety and moderation displayed by the writers, the humour, the genial moralizing, these qualities made for the stupendous success of the Journal. It has been well said that "the *Spectator* made a mark in English Literature, and fixed a form which was adopted with servile fidelity by many periodicals till the end of the century."

In his supreme characterization—the mellow Sir Roger

de Coverley—all that is finest in the old feudalism finds expression.

Steele sketches him in the second *Spectator*; but he is most richly embroidered in the fifteen *Spectators* by Addison, where Sir Roger is introduced in his own country house. Sir Roger comes to London in January 1712 to meet Prince Eugene; on March 18 he goes to the Abbey, and on the 25th of May to Vauxhall. On October 23 his existence is terminated. The best papers dealing with the follies of the day are from the hands of Steele, who, if less delicate and scholarly than Addison, excelled him in genial breadth.

After Journalism came Playwriting. *Cato* was produced at Drury Lane, and despite its dramatic tameness scored a great success. Pope had written an elegant Prologue for it, and Swift, it is said, attended one of the rehearsals.

Then came another period of Essay writing, this time for the *Guardian*, the successor to the *Spectator*. On the Death of Queen Anne Addison entered politics again, and in August 1716 he married the Countess of Warwick. The marriage was not a happy one, and, according to Johnson, resembled the marriage in which a Sultan gives his daughter a man to be her slave; and it has been said, "Holland House, although a large house, could not contain Addison, the Countess of Warwick, and one guest—Peace."

In 1718 his health began to break, and he retired on a good pension, with literary work on hand (though apparently of no great interest) which he never completed. A quarrel with his old friend Steele—largely due to the fact that another had supplanted him in Addison's estimation—embittered his remaining months. The quarrel was never made up.

In June 1719 asthma, which had plagued him all his life, returned, and then dropsy supervened. He died on the 17th, at Holland House, at the age of forty-seven.

The character and genius of Addison are best exemplified in the pages of the *Spectator*. And it is hard to better the comment of his latest biographer, Mr. Courthope, that he "may be said to have almost created and wholly perfected English Prose as an instrument for the expression of social thought." If we compare Addison's prose with the prose of Milton or Hooker or Bacon, we shall realize the delightful plasticity, the delightful *nuances* of mood and fancy for which Addison finds expression. The earlier stylists were rich in eloquence, and in the gift of noble declamation; but they speak in full dress from, as it were, a rostrum. In the *Tatler* and *Spectator* you have the beginning of that genial intimacy of the writer with the reader, which was to find so rare a following at a later time in Elia, in Hazlitt, and in Thackeray. Indebted to the great writers who preceded him, Addison none the less has a manner quite his own; and it is quite obvious how deep are the obligations of the modern generation of essayists, in whom the personal note is so predominant.

And with all this flexibility and ease there is no slipshod writing. So fastidious is his workmanship, that, according to Warton, he would stop the press, on occasion, to alter a preposition or conjunction. Thus for the manner. For the matter, the happy blend of the Puritan spirit and the Renascence spirit proved greatly to the taste of his countrymen. There had been moralists in plenty and before: the stately moralist

in Hooker; the quaint moralist in Sir Francis Bacon; the fiery moralist in Milton. Addison exemplified the happy moralist. "I have," he said truly enough, brought philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell at Clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables, and in Coffee-houses."

Nowhere is Addison more delightful than in illustrating the contrast between the country and town life; the clash of rural feudalism with urban manners. An excellent commentary on the London life of the day is furnished by Sir Roger's opinions on matters theatrical; on Westminster Abbey; on Town Fashions, where this fine old fellow—beside whom Squire Western makes morally but a poor show—leaves the country house where he is seen to such advantage among his friends and retainers. He wishes to see the Prince 'Eugenio,' as he persists in calling Prince Eugene; and he accompanies the *Spectator* on the water to Spring Gardens, or to the theatre to see *The Distressed Mother* played.

The *Spectator* was probably a picture of Addison himself. He is a gentleman who, after studying soberly and well at the University, betakes himself to London, and there observes all the phases of life to be observed; he listens to the wits at Wills'; smokes with 'the philosopher of the Grecian,' maybe with the politician at the 'St. James's,' and with the merchants in the 'Exchange.'

The *Spectator's* friends, with the exception of Sir Roger, and perhaps the old town rake, Will Honeycomb, are not especially interesting; but they serve as excellent puppets to be talked to.

Here in its picture of the Town and Country are all the materials for the modern novel of social life.

Small wonder that, at a time when Richardson was quietly performing his work as compositor, and Fielding indulging in schoolboy exploits; when Smollett and Goldsmith and Sterne were yet unborn, a public should be found for this picture of contemporary life and manners.

Even Pope, his bitter rival, said of him, 'His conversation had something in it more charming than I have found in any other man.'

The trend of the papers in the *Spectator* is thus characterized by their author,—"The great and only end of these speculations is to banish vice and ignorance out of the territories of Great Britain."

It is the first attempt made by Journalism to give form and consistency to public opinion; the first serious effort made, in fact, to organize public opinion by clarifying and systematizing the infinite discussions that went on at the Clubs and Coffee-houses.

From the outset his face is set against the shameless license and shallowness of Restoration manners; he attacks the fashionable youths and cynical men about town who are 'Knight-errants' of vice. To him they are 'a sort of vermin.' When he wishes he can smite hard; but his favourite mood is a mood of delicate and playful satire, and here he is at his happiest. Swift is his superior at the sledge-hammer work.

Both Steele and Addison were of the order of the sober, modest men (*Spectator*, 154) who were apt to be looked upon by both sexes as precise, unfashioned fellows of no life or spirit.

For this reason, the typical early eighteenth century woman is perhaps more readily discovered in the poems of Pope than in the more sedate pages of the *Spectator*.

The woman of whom Addison dreams is rather a latent possibility than an actual fact. While such a man as Pope regards a woman as a pretty plaything, Addison is concerned to chide her frivolities. He would have women realise the part they ought to play in social life.

"The toilet," he writes, "is their great scene of business, and the right enjoyment of their hair the principal employment of their lives. The sorting of a suit of ribands is reckoned a very good morning's work; and if they make an excursion to a mercer's or a toy shop, so great a fatigue makes them unfit for anything else all the day after. Their more serious occupations are sewing and embroidering, and their greatest drudgery the preparation of jellies and sweetmeats. This, I say, is the state of ordinary women: though I know there are multitudes of those of a more elevated life and conversation that move in an exalted sphere of knowledge and virtue, that join all the beauties of mind to the ornaments of dress, and inspire a kind of awe and respect, as well as of love into their male beholders. I hope to increase the number of these by publishing this daily paper . . . and divert the minds of my female readers from greater trifles."[1]

This is a wholesome sermon, but it sketches a possibility rather than describes an actuality. If we would picture the "lie in bed till noon, dress all the afternoon, dine in the evening, and play at cards till midnight" divinity who looms so largely in early eighteenth-century society, surely it is Belinda of *The Rape of the Lock* who comes to mind.

There is more than a measure of truth in Pope's heroi-comical poem. The decoration is farcical. Such phrases, for instance, as "shining altars of Japan" for lacquered trays, or "the velvet plain" for a card-table. But the whole poem was based upon an actual episode. In 1711 a quarrel between the families of Petre and

[1] *Spectator*, No. 10.

Fermor arose through Lord Petre cutting off a lock of Miss Fermor's hair. John Caryll of Ladybolt suggested that Pope "should laugh the parties together again." *The Rape of the Lock* was the result, with its introduction expressly addressed to Mrs. Arabella Fermor.

Pope's view of eighteenth-century womanhood differs from Addison's in its greater artificiality :—

> Sol, through white curtains, did his beams display ;
> And oped those eyes, which brighter shine than they.
> Now Shock had given himself the rousing shake,
> And nymphs prepared their chocolate to take :
> Thrice the wrought slipper knocked against the ground
> And striking watches the tenth hour resound.
> Belinda still her downy pillow prest,
> Her guardian Sylph prolonged the balmy rest.

Or the picture of the Court at Hampton, which, begun by Wolsey in 1515, had just been finished by Sir Christopher Wren :—

> Hither the Heroes and the Nymphs resort
> To taste awhile the pleasures of a court !
> In various talk th' instructive hours they past,
> Who gave the Ball, or paid the visit, last !
> One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
> And one describes a charming Indian screen ;
> A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes,
> At every word a reputation dies !

Or, best of all, the famous game at Ombre, which, by the way, is still played in Spain, where it is known as Tresillo. Each player has nine cards, and challenges the rest by undertaking to make a certain number of tricks, "Yo soy l'hombre" being the phrase which designates the choser of trumps. As Pope imagines the game, Belinda "is the man." She picks up the ace of spades, the two of spades, the ace of clubs, the king of spades, the king of clubs, the five of diamonds, the

three of hearts, the six of hearts, and the king of hearts —the whole constituting "the sacred nine."

> The skilful Nymph reviews her force with care;
> "Let spades be Trumps," she said, and Trumps they were.

No hasty sketch of Ombre will enable a degenerate modern to acquire Mrs. Battle's power to play through the famous game. So, perhaps, it will be as well to pass on to the brief interlude, when play stops for a moment for light refreshment :—

> For, lo! the board with cups and spoons is crowned,
> The berries crackle and the Mill goes round.
> On shining Altars of Japan they raise
> The silver lamp and fiery spirits blaze!
> From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide;
> And China's earth receives the smoking tide.

With this picture of flippant women and foolish men, the curtain may well fall upon Miss Fermor and Lord Petre.

But there is another aspect of the eighteenth-century life and thought which is suggested by the pages of Pope.

Leslie Stephen has well said that "in religion or morality, and in politics, the Thought of the Age recognized a system of abstract rules, mathematically precise and coherent, which, as regarded from various aspects, gave rise to the conceptions of the religion of Nature, the law of Nature, the Social Contract, and other allied hypotheses"; and if we descend from the general to the particular we shall find in the imaginative life of eighteenth-century London this spirit of formalism, this devotion to what is 'reasonable,' which characterize the political and philosophic thought of the day. It affects the prose less than the poetry, and the humour and rich observation of concrete life displayed by

Addison cover up many of its emotional deficiencies. But the whole of the poetry, from the time of the Restoration until the closing years of the eighteenth century, is weighted by the double curse of a surface gaiety and chilly didacticism. The fine dictum that Poetry should be simple, sensuous, and passionate was completely disregarded. The Restoration poets were artificial and superficial, despite their wit and ésprit; and in the poets who followed them, notwithstanding graces of style, cleverness of satire, and an agreeable aptitude for trifling, there is a notable absence of depth, sincerity, and passion.

It was the tragedy of Swift to have been born out of his time: morbidly sensitive, moodily passionate, we none the less realise the essential greatness, the furious sincerity of the man as he gazes, in savage despair, at the pettiness, the coldness, the facile optimism of his Age, and flings at them, in the agony of his soul, the splendid brutalities of his quivering passions and mordant intellect.

If, however, the absence of enthusiasm negatived the production of great Poetry, it must not blind us to the particular merits of the school of Pope. Indeed, for our purposes here, it is the more valuable, because it is so faithfully typical of the time.

At the house of a linen-draper in Lombard Street, was born, in 1688, a sickly and delicate child—Alexander Pope. His talent was of the precocious order; fashioned for a life of study, he knew no other pleasure than that which comes from the poring over books. Epics and tragedy he knocks off readily while in his early teens, and throughout his youth he reads, reads, reads,—Homer, Tasso, Ariosto, Virgil, Ovid,—classical and modern writers, poetry, criticism, drama, either in

the original or in translation, until almost he dies of over-much study.

His great search is not the search of Paracelsus for Truth: it is for Style. Wycherley, now in his old age, acts as mentor to the ambitious young man; Pope smarts under his frank criticism and finally breaks with him.

But his promise has attracted Dryden—and when yet on the threshold of manhood he completed his *Essay on Criticism*, the reading public felt that a new star had arrived. What kind of radiance the star would shed was another matter.

In appearance he was singularly unimpressive.

A body of miserable weakness was a heritage from birth—headaches from his mother and a crooked figure from his father. In a moment of bitter insight, Pope once spoke of "that long disease, my life," while Swift said of him that "two bites and a sup more than your stint will cost you more than others pay for a regular debauch."

By middle life, Pope's physical weakness was so constant that he could not dress without aid. Cold affected him so greatly that he was compelled to wear a fur doublet under his coarse linen shirt. "When he rose," writes Johnson, "he was invested in boddices made of stiff canvas, being scarcely able to hold himself erect till they were laced, and he then put on a flannel waistcoat. One side was contracted. His legs were so slender that he enlarged their bulk with three pairs of stockings, which were drawn on and off by the maid."

Nor did disabilities end here. He came of Papist stock in days when English Catholics were condemned to pay double taxation. His father was no more than a minor London merchant. The boy's education was

of the most miscellaneous description. "Small Latin and less Greek" seems an odd description to apply to so famous a translator of Homer—yet it was true.

What fate did not deny to the man, Alexander Pope, was an all-dominating love for the craft of poetry. According to the light which was given him, Pope was never content with less than the polished best.

It was this quality which finally secured him the kingship of Literary London after the death of Addison. From the time of Pope's first coming to London, there were those who knew that a new force had arisen. Even before the publication of the first volume of the *Iliad*, Swift—a *persona grata* at Court—was proclaiming that the "best poet in England was Mr. Pope, a Papist," and announcing that the *Homer* should not be printed until at least a thousand guineas had been subscribed for the author.

As it turned out, Swift under-estimated the monetary value of Pope's work. The *Iliad* was published in six volumes, for which Lintot, the publisher, paid £200 a volume, in addition to furnishing a large number of free copies for the subscribers. These numbered five hundred and seventy-five, and they took six hundred and fifty-four sets at a guinea a volume. The *Odyssey* brought Pope in £3500, after considerable sums had been paid to assistants. So that rather more than £9000 was netted by the author alone. In addition, Lintot made a fortune.

By the year 1718, Pope was in a position of independence, and was able to take the house at Twickenham which is always so closely associated with his memory. The spot had much to recommend it. Both by road and river it was within easy reach of London. The poet's friends could readily come down for a chat.

The plot of land around the house was large enough to secure absolute peace. Within a few years the ideal of graceful symmetry, which is so characteristic alike of Pope and his Age, prevaded every part of the garden. Some well-known lines by Pope himself suggest a lively picture of the place where half of the witty wisdom of the early eighteenth century was born.

> His garden next your admiration all
> On every side you look, behold the wall.
> No pleasing intricacies intervene,
> No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
> Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
> And half the platform just reflects the other.

If a less ordered picture is preferred there is a little sketch by Horace Walpole which may be quoted: "Pope had twisted and twirled and harmonized this, till it appeared two or three sweet little lawns, opening and opening one beyond another, and the whole surrounded with impenetrable woods."

Here Swift, Bolingbroke, Congreve, and Gay were wont to exchange wit and wisdom and, perchance, to forge the weapons which were to be used in the war with the Dunces—the war which was waged on behalf of a single valueless Truth :—

> Out with it, Dunciad: let the secret pass,
> That secret to each fool—that he's an ass.

Here strange schemes were proposed and discussed for the launching of these literary shafts upon the wondering world. The early spurious editions of the *Dunciad*, for instance; the simultaneous publication in Dublin and London, and the like. Here it was that Bolingbroke sketched the first rough philosophical propositions eventually polished into the *Essay on Man*.

And here it was that Pope, with only the silence for company, wove the tiny slips of paper upon which he was wont to jot his disjointed ideas into an harmonious whole.

> Now backs of letters, though design'd
> For those who more will need 'em,
> Are fill'd with hints and interlin'd
> Himself will scarcely read 'em.
> Each atom by some other struck
> All turns and motions tries,
> Till in a lump together stuck
> Behold a poem rise.

Lastly, it was at Twickenham, on May 30, 1744, that the restless spirit of the poet finally quitted the world which it had never loved. The bruised body was buried in Twickenham Church. The better part of the man—his work—is with us still in the form of the pithy couplets in which Alexander Pope embodied the crystal-hard wisdom of his Age and the "Rape of the Lock."

In later times, when the wits no longer foregathered at the Coffee-house, it became a place for small tradesmen to congregate and read papers. The Clubs took the place of the Coffee-houses for the well-to-do—but began in a very small way, some not having a house of their own save where a Coffee-house had merged from its chrysalis into a butterfly.

There is much gossip about Clubs in the writings of the notorious Ned Ward (author of *The London Spy*), one of the scurrilous pamphleteers of William the Third's reign.

Ward, at the close of a varied life, seasoned by numerous appearances in the pillory, relinquished the excitements of disreputable journalism for the quieter

joys of shop management in Holborn. No one knew the Coffee-houses and Clubs better than *The London Spy*, and he gossips about their eccentricities with much gusto.

Here is his description of one of the largest of the Coffee-houses—'The Old Man':—

We now ascended a pair of stairs which brought us into an old-fashioned room, where a gaudy crowd of odoriferous Town-Essences were walking backwards and forwards with their hats in their hands, not daring to convert them to their intended use, lest it should put the foretops of their wigs into some disorder. We squeezed through till we got to the end of the room, where at a small table we sat down, and observed that it was as great a rarity to hear anybody call for a dish of Politician Porridge, or any other liquor, as it is to hear a bear call for a pipe of tobacco; their whole exercise being to charge and discharge their nostrils, and keep the curls of their periwigs in their proper order. The clashing of their snush-box lids in opening and shutting made more noise than their tongues. Bows and crimps of the newest mode were here exchanged 'twixt friend and friend with wonderful exactness. They made a humming like so many hornets in a country chimney, not with their talking, but with their whispering over their minuets and Bories [this a Spanish-French dance—Bourrées] with their hands in their pockets, if only freed from their Snush-box.

A famous Club of the time, a Club of desperate associations and still more desperate fables, "The Mohocks Club," was written upon by Addison in the *Spectator*, and was evidently taken seriously as an institution by the men of the time. There is some reason to believe it was a kind of institutional Mrs. Harris. But at any rate the fact that so many atrocities were attributed to them sufficiently testifies to the rough manners and mob violence of the Time.

There was, however, in existence, a "Hell Fire Club" —though here again it is probably a case of the devil being less black (or less lurid rather) than he is painted. A pleasanter institution was the famous "Beefsteak Club," founded in the reign of Anne. This Club met every Saturday in a room at the top of Covent Garden theatre, and there justified its name. Churchill, Colman, Garrick, Hogarth, Tickell, Kemble, and Wilkes, and many other notables belonged to the Club. Punch drinking, epigram making, interspersed with snatches of song, and much personal abuse—such was the ritual. I must confess that I have never come across any very startling examples of the witty things said. Such examples as may be unearthed, rather remind me of the brilliant repartee that passed between Pickwick and Tupman.

A Club of a more modest character was the "Two-penny Club"—the poor man's club. Some of the rules combine instruction with amusement:—

If any member tell stories in the Club that are not true, he shall forfeit for every third lie, one Halfpenny.

If any neighbour swears or curses, his neighbour may give him a kick upon the shins.

If any member brings his wife into the Club he shall pay for whatever she drinks or smokes.

So much for the lighter, more leisurely side of eighteenth century life—but there was another side, a grimmer and darker side, and to that we must now turn.

CHAPTER XII

THE LONDON OF JOHNSON AND HOGARTH

> The city's fine show . . .
> Such justling and bustling.
>
> DAVID GARRICK.

> A populous and a smoky city
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Small justice shown and still less pity.
>
> SHELLEY.

IF certain aspects of social life in the eighteenth century are reflected in the writings of Addison and Pope, we must consider men like Johnson and Hogarth if we would learn something of the sterner matter of the times. For the comedy side of the Age, Pope and Addison will serve as typical exponents; since even when they touched the deeper springs of life, they did so with the constrained perfunctoriness of men who fulfil the ritual of Church attendances, with a furtive eye all the while on the clock.

But there was another world outside the leisurely and urbane visitation of the Spectator; a dark underworld of want and misery, of fierce primal passions and desperate resolves. Pope knew of it, and from the safe, secluded arbour of success he railed bitterly, mercilessly, at the poor wretches of Grub Street, on whom fortune had forgotten to smile. Some measure of kindness and compassion might have been expected

from one to whom this Dark Valley of the Shadow was more than a name; but Pope was mean in soul as well as in body, and wasted a brilliant intellect too often upon sorry and petty things.

Other names than Johnson and Hogarth there are which carry us into "those dark streets where Wisdom herself has stood and no man regarded": Fielding and Smollett had tarried there for a while; the tragic figure of Richard Savage never emerges from the gloom; one recalls the gaunt wretchedness of scribblers like Boyes and Derrick, whom Johnson befriended; the hack work to which Defoe's genius had perforce to stoop, in order that he might live; of those political journalists about whom Pendennis has much to say. Finally, for we might multiply instances galore, there is that quaint, delightful, impecunious Irishman, Oliver Goldsmith. But the great, uncouth, burly, lovable figure of Johnson will serve our purpose. He survived where many fell by the way: like the Pilgrim in the Allegory, he struggled through the Valley into the Sunlight beyond, with deep thankfulness. But no one knew the underworld better than Johnson or sympathized more practically with its dwellers. "He has nothing of him of the bear but the skin," as Goldsmith gratefully and truly said—and his views of authorship were expressed in Dryden's translation of the Entrance to Hell described by Virgil:—

> Just in the Gate and in the jaws of Hell
> Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell—
> And pale diseases and repining age,
> Want, fear and famine, unresisting rage:
> Here toils Death and Death's half brother Sleep—
> Forms terrible to view, their sentry keep.

"All these apply exactly to an author," was the

Doctor's comment. Humour and Tragedy are inseparable bed-fellows in the life of Grub Street, and the story is told of an impoverished author, Floyd by name, who, in his weary night wanderings came across a brother unfortunate sleeping soundly by the wayside. When Floyd roused him, this gentleman, with a manner suggesting the immortal Dick Swiveller, exclaimed, "My dear Floyd, I am sorry to see you in this destitute state; will you go home with me to my lodgings." Perhaps the tattered and impecunious scribbler alone could perambulate safely through the City of these times. Of the criminal, and of the prevalent system of Justice, I shall speak more fully when I come to treat of Hogarth. It is sufficient to note here the general insecurity of the streets. Johnson's neighbourhood of Covent Garden was especially rife in thieves and disreputables. He discovered that the best guard against a street robber was a stout cudgel. It may be doubted whether there were more or as many criminals in London as to-day; but the inefficient Police System made detection and punishment a much more difficult matter.

Henry Fielding, in his "Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers, etc., with some proposals for remedying the Growing Evil," gives a clear picture of the plague of dangerous ne'er-do-weels. After a concise picture of evils arising from gambling and drink, especially from that 'new kind of drunkenness . . . by that poison called gin,' and matters which lead into crime in every age, he lights upon the peculiar weakness of his time—the corruption of Justice. Bribery was everywhere; in politics it was, of course, the recognized thing; and when both the watchmen and the constables were bribed, and the magistrate was too often incapable,

it was small wonder that roguery should be so great a curse. And as is always the case, the Government, being inefficient, made up for its weakness by grotesque cruelties when by chance any one was found out.

The Johnson who lives for us to-day in the pages of Boswell is the successful Johnson, the literary Dictator upon whose words everybody hung; the man who put aside the author's craft with unmistakable satisfaction, now that poverty could no more dog his footsteps. But it is hard to read aright the greatness or the weakness of the man unless we recall his early agonies in Grub Street.

Suffering hardens some natures—drying up the fount of pity and compassion. It intensified, in Johnson's case, the man's amazing tenderness of heart and deep-grained humanity. And here it is that Johnson so far excels men like Addison and Pope. Addison's nature was sweeter and sounder than his rival's: graciousness, kindliness, and urbanity are certainly to be found in him. What one misses is that 'divine discontent,' that riotous goodness of heart, that prodigal tenderness, which remain in our memories long after the roughnesses of Johnson are forgotten.

But Grub Street had existed before Johnson's time; there was a Grub Street in the time of Robert Greene —sinner and moralist—and the happy-go-lucky Nash; ever since the time of Marlowe, the literary vagabonds of the Age had foregathered at the Tavern, and the author of *The Jew of Malta* was not the only one to perish in a drunken brawl. During the Civil Wars —when the pamphleteer sprang into being—Grub Street numbered its devotees. Want and necessity, those hungry wolves which have followed the poor artist in

every age, claimed among their victims the sweet singer Edmund Spenser, and the brilliant Otway. Spenser flying from a dismantled home in Ireland, had perished miserably in Westminster, forsaken and an outcast. Otway, it is said, 'languished in adversity unpitied, and dy'd in an alehouse unlamented.'

As a rule, the man who enters the monastery of letters, takes of necessity the Vows of Poverty. Popularity carried with it, for many a generation no respite here. True, there were exceptions—Shakespeare, for example. But Shakespeare was a pauper beside men like Whittington or Crosby. And although Patronage improved the lot of men such as Ben Jonson and Dryden, of Congreve, Addison, and Pope, these were few to set beside the vast army to whom Comfort was an alien, and Prosperity an unknown God.

However, it must be admitted that the lot of the writer was improving during the century. When one remembers the few pounds that came from *Paradise Lost*, seven hundred pounds for *Tom Jones* seems quite an impressive sum.

The impecuniosity of men of letters was not due entirely to public indifference: extravagance and improvidence played their share in the tale of mean streets.

Samuel Boyse, whose clothes had been got out of pawn owing to the generous exertions of Johnson, would spend, it is said, his last few shillings to buy truffles and mushrooms for his bit of meat. And then when all his money was spent he would take to his bed, cover himself with a blanket, and through holes made in this covering, he would cheerfully continue to write.

Johnson never forgot those who helped him in his days of hardship—when as a young married man he was desperately striving to eke out a living on a meagre

purse. There was one Henry Hervey, a considerable rogue, even on Johnson's showing; but he had helped Johnson, so the grateful Doctor said of him—"You call a dog Hervey, I shall love him."

One of the most remarkable of Johnson's early companions was Richard Savage, poet and vagabond. Johnson describes him as 'of middle stature, of a thin habit of body, of long visage, coarse features and melancholy aspect.' He made his acquaintance in 1737, and they would often roam the streets together; on one occasion they walked up and down St. James' Square for several hours, denouncing Sir Robert Walpole and making resolutions to 'stand by their country.'

Savage, far inferior to Johnson both in character and intellect, had acquired, through knocking about the world, a goodish knowledge of men and things, which naturally impressed the young, responsive Johnson.

It is typical of Johnson that he should try so desperately hard to paint an attractive picture of his old companion; the best thing to be recorded of Savage is his friendliness for Johnson. Many men had befriended Savage—including Steele, but he ill repaid his friends; and few could have lamented when he died at last in a Debtor's Prison.

Dickens could never recall his youthful hardships save with fierce indignation; indelibly had his early suffering seared his imagination. And Johnson would burst into tears when reminded of his dark days. One can well understand the meaning of his outburst: "No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money"; and the intense relief with which he relinquished his pen. Boswell once expressed his wonder that Johnson had not more pleasure in writing than in not writing. "Sir," replied the irascible idol—"You *may wonder.*"

But if he felt entitled to indulge himself with literary abstinence, yet the glamour of Fleet Street and Covent Garden held him, as it held Lamb and Leigh Hunt a generation later, and neither of the latter had the same reason to shrink from their mistress as he had. Yet the worse she ill-treated him the more he loved her. Boswell was soon as orthodox as his master; discipleship was no hard matter with him: "Is not this very fine?" enquired the sage as they promenaded in Greenwich Park. "Yes, Sir," replied Boswell, "but not equal to Fleet Street"—then added unblushingly that a baronet from Rydal (assuredly no progenitor of Wordsworth) had declared the "fragrance of a May evening in the country to be all very well, but that he preferred the smell of a flambeau at the playhouse." On another occasion Boswell praised the cheerfulness of Fleet Street. "Why, Sir," said Johnson, "Fleet Street has a very animated appearance, but I think that the full tide of human existence is at Charing Cross."[1] An amusing story then followed of a tallow-chandler who had made a fortune in London, and was foolish enough to retire to the country. He grew so weary of his sylvan retreat that he begged to know the melting days of his successor that he might be present at the operation.

The Theatre.—Garrick did much to raise the tone of the drama, and a noticeable feature of the age was the increasing interest in the theatre by the middle classes. The Shakespearean revivals brought forward a number of notable actresses. Then, as now, the young exquisite and lady of fashion went as much to be seen as to see. Roderick Random declared that he "rose and sat down,

[1] Charing Cross meant Hungerford Market and its purlieus in Johnson's 'day.'

covered and uncovered " his head " twenty times between the acts," affected to take snuff, wiped his nose with a perfumed handkerchief, dangled his cane, and adjusted his sword knot " in order to attract attention."

The Play started later than formerly—at five in the afternoon. Quite late enough for a dark and dangerous London, when home-going would be almost as risky as in Pepys' day.

Johnson's attitude towards the theatre of his time was one of reluctant approval. Early associations with Garrick—they had come up to London together—and a genuine regard for his abilities, jostled with contempt for the actor's calling. Actors he stigmatized as 'dancing dogs.' " But, Sir, you will allow that some players are better than others? " " Yes, Sir, as some dogs dance better than others." He was rather partial to the dog simile, for on another occasion when Boswell told him that he had heard a Quaker woman preach, " A woman's preaching," said Johnson, " is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all."

He could not be argued out of his contempt for mimicry. Boswell urged that a great player was worthy of respect. " What, Sir ! " exclaimed Johnson, " a fellow who clasps a hump upon his back and a limp in his leg, and cries, 'I am Richard the Third'? "

Despite all this, and occasional frictions, he and Garrick got on fairly well. He admired Garrick's modesty in view of his great popularity. " If all this had happened to me," he said on one occasion with characteristic generosity and frankness, " I should have had a couple of fellows with long poles walking before me to throw everybody that stood in their way."

It was an Age of fine and notable actresses—Mrs.

Oldfield, Mrs. Abingdon, Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Jordan,—lively, winning, and intelligent, one and all. One envies Johnson his philosophic (in the Pickwickian sense) chats in Garrick's Green Room with Peg Woffington and other leading ladies. Some one rallied Johnson after his appearance at Mrs. Abingdon's benefit. "Why did you go?" he asked. "Did you see?" "No, Sir." "Did you hear?" "No, Sir." "Why then, Sir, did you go?" "Because, Sir, she is a favourite of the public, and when the public cares the thousandth part for you that it does for her, I will go to your benefit too."

When seventy-five years old he received a visit from the celebrated Mrs. Siddons, on which he thus comments in a letter to Mrs. Thrale (Oct. 27, 1783):—

> Mrs. Siddons, in her visit to me, behaved with great modesty and propriety, and left nothing behind her to be censured or despised; neither praise nor money, the two powerful corruptions of mankind, seems to have depraved her. I shall be glad to see her again. Her brother Kemble calls on me, and pleases me very well. Mrs. Siddons and I talked of plays, and she told me her intention of exhibiting this winter the characters of Constance, Katharine, and Isabella. . . .

Boswell obtained an account of the visit from Kemble.

When Mrs. Siddons came into the room there happened to be no chair ready for her, observing which, Johnson said with a smile: "Madam, you who so often occasion a want of seats to other people will the more easily excuse the want of one yourself." Having placed himself by her, he entered with great good humour upon a consideration of the English drama; and among other enquiries, particularly asked her which of Shakespeare's characters she was most pleased

with. Upon her answering that she thought the character of Queen Katharine in *Henry VIII.* the most natural, "I think so too, Madam, and whenever you perform it I will once more hobble out to the theatre myself." Mrs. Siddons promised she would do herself the honour of acting his favourite part for him; but circumstances prevented her from fulfilling her promise during the Doctor's life.

Of other actresses he said: "Mrs. Clive in the sprightliness of humour I have never seen equalled. What Clive did best she did better than Garrick, but could not do half so many things well; she was a better romp than any I have seen in nature. Pritchard in common life was a vulgar idiot; she would talk of her *gownd*; but when she appeared upon the Stage, seemed to be inspired by gentility and understanding."

Johnson gave up going to the Green Room after a while, admitting with characteristic directness that the actresses appealed too strongly to his senses.

Other men of letters partial to the theatre were Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. Ever since the Restoration Drury Lane Theatre had been the home of comedy, and the plays of Wycherley, Congreve, Farquhar, were produced for the most part there; also the majority of Dryden's. The sentimental comedies of Steele followed. These were only fairly successful. "Steele," says Leigh Hunt, "admirable as an essayist, and occasionally as humorous as any dramatist in a scene or two, was hampered in his plays by the new moral ambition now coming up, which induced him to show not so much what people are, as his notions of what they ought to be."[1] Following Steele came Garrick with series of Shakespeare's plays, and he was

[1] Vide *The Town*, by Leigh Hunt, Chapter VII., Drury Lane.

succeeded by Sheridan, "a far better dramatist and a still worse manager than Steele."

In Johnson's day there was a much better tone about the plays produced than at the Restoration period; while the actress, so monstrous an innovation in the days of Pepys, could hold her own with the most celebrated actor.

Peg Woffington, of course, belongs to this age, reputed to be the handsomest woman that ever appeared on the stage. She objected to the company of her own sex, who talk of 'nothing but silks and scandal.' She is said to have been the only woman admitted into the Beefsteak Club. Here in 1749, "Seated in a great chair at the head of the table," she was elected President for the season. Garrick at one time meditated marrying her, but finally decided against it.

If audiences were less noisy than they had been in Elizabethan and Stuart times, there was still much room for improvement. Between 1697 and 1737 the practice prevailed of giving footmen free access to the gallery. This originated in the desire to free the lobbies of these quarrelsome and noisy fellows, but it only signified a transference of the noise to a more objectionable quarter. The managers put an end to it at last, but not without much rioting and protest.

Garrick endeavoured to clear off the Stage all except the actors. He also much improved the lighting effects by introducing footlights in place of the circular chandelier hitherto suspended over the Stage.

In an Age when Humanitarian feeling was only discernible in some of the finer spirits, the whole attitude of the time, as witnessed by debates in Parliament,

indicating complete indifference to the sufferings of the brute creation, Johnson's tenderness towards animals is especially marked. Like the staid and philosophic Bentham, he was very partial to cats; and one recalls Boswell's quaint anecdote concerning Hodge. He would go out and buy oysters for this cat, "lest the servants, having that trouble, should take a dislike to the poor creature."

"I recollect him," says Boswell, "scrambling up Dr. Johnson's breast apparently with much satisfaction, while my friend, smiling and half-whistling, rubbed down his back and pulled him by the tail, and when I observed he was a fine cat (Boswell had a horror of cats), saying, 'Why, yes, Sir, but I have had cats whom I liked better than this'; and then, as if perceiving Hodge to be out of countenance, adding, 'but he is a very fine cat, a very fine cat indeed.'"

Johnson's associations with Fleet Street were many: first, living in Fetter Lane, then in Boswell Court, in Gough Square; after that, in the Inner Temple Lane, in Johnson Lane; finally, in Bolt Court.

When first he came to Town he lodged at the house of Mr. Morris, a staymaker in Exeter Street; dining at the "Pine Apple" in New Street, "for eightpence, with very good company." "I had," said Johnson, "a cut of meat for sixpence, and bread for a penny, and gave the waiter a penny." On clean shirt days, remarked his biographer significantly, he went abroad and paid visits.

At twelve o'clock, we are told (this would apply to the prosperous years of literary dictatorship), he received a levee of morning visitors in his bedroom,—Goldsmith and others, chiefly men of letters, and to them he would declaim over a twelve o'clock dish of tea. He then

went to dinner at a tavern, most frequently the "Mitre" Tavern, where he commonly stayed late, and then drank his tea at a friend's house, over which he loitered a great deal, but seldom took supper. He frequently gave all the silver in his pocket to the poor, who watched him between his house and the tavern where he dined.

Johnson's tribute to the tavern is well known. "Sir, there is no other place where the more noise you make, the more welcome you are." The noise was obviously congenial to this great patron of tavern life, and stimulated him to more wit and wisdom of speech, in all probability, than may be found in his writings.

In Gough Square part of the *Dictionary* was written.

The London of Johnson was a noisy, turbulent, high-spirited London. But the old gaiety, the picturesque festivals of the City, before Puritanism had frowned over its pleasures, were no longer to be seen. May-poles had disappeared, and with them the genuine music and poetry of the open-air life had also gone. Domesticity and the tavern, rivals in one way, yet conspired together to give a blow to the old social life of the streets. The festivals that survived—like Guy Fawkes day—were less occasions of innocent merriment at first than expressions of the national hatred of Catholicism, a deep-rooted sentiment that prevailed down to the Lord George Gordon Riots.

The glorious pageant of the Lord Mayor's Show had become a paltry business, but was as popular as ever, though it was as different from that of Whittington's day as was Cinderella's gorgeous coach from the pumpkin.

A visitor to London describes his Christmastide: "On Christmas Day he watched the meek-looking crowd of poor outside the Church door waiting for

their alms. Having received it, they fought vigorously among themselves, then sallied forth to a tavern, when they 'were carried or led home' some hours later." On Boxing Day, he noted how every one came for his box. All the shop-assistants and clerks—including the Parish Clerk—the bellman, the watch, the constable, the beadle, the dustman,—'they all came in one long stream.' The day after, the visitor goes to a threepenny hop in Piccadilly. The young men were chiefly shop-assistants; the ladies were—what you please. There were two fiddles. Suddenly, the entrance of constables put an end to the joy; the dance was illegal—consequently Bow Street and fines.

On the fourth day the visitor participated in a safer relaxation, that of a dinner given by a merchant in the City, where he was amazed by the profusion of the food. And his frivolities closed with Twelfth Day—"when the magnificence of the pastry-cooks surprised and delighted him."

Fairs had always been popular in London as in other parts of the country. They were less important in London than at such places as Winchester, for instance, where the trade of the city was suspended for a fortnight, during which time the Fair was carried on. But that of St. Bartholomew, for the sale of Flemish cloth, was quite a big matter. It lasted for two days (there was no need for a lengthy Fair in London), and was given within the precincts of the Priory. Thus the Fair at its start. Afterwards, when English cloth was as good as Flemish, this Fair became a place for the sale of all kinds of finery and fal-lals, interspersed by side-shows where music, dancing, gambling, drinking, and so forth, went on nearly all day long, to encourage

customers and to absorb their gains. And in the pages of Ben Jonson we may read of the rough humour and diversions of St. Bartholomew's Fair.

The Puritans did not touch the Fair, strange to say. Perhaps they thought some vent for young spirits was desirable, or at any rate made a virtue of necessity.

In the eighteenth century the Fair became a kind of Barnum's Show—the rough mob of the Age took especial delight in it.

After the Restoration it had been extended to fourteen days, but in 1708 it was found desirable to reduce it to three days. Strenuous efforts were made in 1769 to keep order, and gambling and play-acting were prohibited. Previous to this some of the leading actors of the time were to be seen at the Fair—Cibber and Mrs. Pritchard, for instance.

But amusements less select soon took the place of the acting, the rowdiness continued, and neither your money nor your person was safe. At length, what the constable could not, the plan of doubling the rent of the ground did effect. The fun languished, the side-shows melted away, and after 1855 the Fair ceased to take place.

A notable addition to the serious recreation of Londoners was the British Museum. The British Museum was once situate in a "noble suburb." Bloomsbury had then very fine houses and large gardens, flanked by country lanes and pretty cottages. It was then Montague House and the repository of Sir Hans Sloane's famous collection. This was in 1753.

It is curious to recall the fact that we owe the British Museum, the centre of modern London's intellectual life, to a lottery. What is more, no less a

triumvirate than the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, and the Speaker of the House of Commons, consented to act as managers and trustees of the lottery. It came about in this manner.

The Library and Collection which Sir Hans Sloane, the well-known doctor, had got together was offered to the country for a nominal £20,000. The Treasury at the time did not care to advance the money, and the House of Commons chose to order the issue of a State Lottery (26 Geo. II. c. 22). 100,000 tickets at £3 each were issued, £200,000 being spent in prizes, varying from £10,000 to £10. The remaining £100,000 was placed to the credit of the British Museum Purchase Fund. Not only was the Sloane collection bought, but the Harleian and Cotton manuscripts were acquired. Moreover, Montague House was purchased, so that the Museum was thrown open to the public in 1759.

The purchase of the Harleian MSS., the gift by George IV. of a library of nearly 30,000 volumes, and the acquisition (early in the late century) of the Elgin Marbles, increased the importance of the Museum in national estimation.

The new buildings were begun about the same time.

Among the early rules was the following gem :—

> The visitors must be conducted in regular order, and the whole inspection is not to last more than three hours.

For the less seriously inclined there was the sorry sport of Cock-fighting, which was as popular in Johnson's days as in FitzStephen's. It occupied the same place in popular estimation as horse-racing does to-day. And it had the advantage of being in season all the year

long. As a set-off to the excitement of the Cock-pit there was the Sunday Concert, where Dr. Blow's anthems were given, and poems recited by the Poet Laureate "in praise of religion and virtue."

There was a decided change for the worse in the manners of the early eighteenth century; the polish of the Restoration period had worn off, and now manners and morals were fairly well balanced. The early Georges, with their boorish tastes, set no grand standard of courtesy and refinement; and Ministers like Walpole harmonized uncommonly well with the general atmosphere of the Court. Walpole, indeed, was like a foul-mouthed country squire, and he and George II. vied with one another in coarse invective.

Then came a swing in the other direction with the advent of Chesterfield, his Turveydrop notions of Deportment, and his amazing involution of Speech. It is said that according to him 'One should say, in condoling with a friend, not "I am sorry for your loss," but "I hope, Sir, you will do me the justice to be persuaded that I am not insensible of your unhappiness, that I take part in your distress, and shall ever be affected when you are so."'

What Chesterfield was in speech, Horace Walpole was in dress. Masquerades, an extremely popular and roysterous relaxation, were first held at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, and the 'quality' assembled in Ranelagh Gardens, Chelsea, or in Vauxhall. Horace Walpole pronounced in favour of Vauxhall, for 'the garden is pleasanter and one goes by water.'

The fashionable balls afforded great opportunities for display of costume. The most exclusive was the City Assembly. It is said that to become a member

required as much interest as to become a Member of Parliament. Here is a contemporary description :—

> The men were chiefly in dress coats, with their hair in bags; those who were not, wore cloth coats trimmed with narrow gold lace, white waistcoats of silver tissue, or ornamented with gold spangles, and the hair in a short thick queue, with curls flying out on each side of the head. Many of the elderly ladies were almost covered with diamonds.

But despite the selectness and grandeur of these fashionable balls, violence was no unfrequent occurrence.

Garrick did much to popularize and, if one may coin the word, respectablize the theatre. The licentiousness of the Restoration drama had aroused the latent Puritanism of the People, and during the earlier years of the eighteenth century the theatre was not largely patronized. Fancy dress balls and masquerades, and the rough humour of the Fair, were far more in evidence. After Garrick, the theatre gained considerably in prestige.

We have seen something of the estimate of womenkind by men like Addison and Pope. In the earlier years of the century woman is regarded, when not as a plaything, at any rate as little better than a housekeeper. But about the year 1760 a change took place in the status of women.

A certain Mrs. Montague, a friend of the Duchess of Portland, attempted a reform of manners by inaugurating parties "where cards could not be thought of," but "where the fair sex might participate in conversation with literary and ingenious men."

Benjamin Stillingfleet appeared there in morning dress, wearing grey worsted stockings in place of the conventional black silk. And the term 'blue stocking,'

flung by Admiral Boscawen at these gatherings, had a very literal signification.

The ladies regarded the term with complacency, averring that no gathering was complete without Stillingfleet's blue stockings. Other ladies had their special groups, and in this way the literary women of the day met and fraternized together—Hannah More, Mrs. Thrale, Hannah Cowley (author of the *Belle's Stratagem*), and Frances Burney. The latter had no relish for the bookishness of certain circles, and many of the women were far happier in circles where Johnson and Burke declaimed to their admirers.

Breakfast parties sprang into vogue during the eighteenth century, and were somewhat formidable affairs. In the earlier years of the nineteenth century many famous literary gatherings took place at these, as we may learn from Crabb Robinson's diary.

But the fashionable breakfast party was a mysterious festivity if we may judge from a letter written in 1812 to the *Gentleman's Magazine*:—

> . . . I was asked by a lady at whose house the best company in town are to be seen, to partake of a public breakfast. No hour being mentioned on the card, and judging that late London hours might naturally make breakfast time rather later than with us in the country, I delayed my setting out till midday. When I arrived, a servant informed me that if I wished to see the lady of the house he believed she was not yet stirring. "That," said I, "is impossible, for I am invited this very day to breakfast with her." "Lord, Sir," says the porter, "the breakfast hour is from four to five." I was more astonished than ever at this distribution of time; which not suiting the craving of my appetite, I found it necessary at a neighbouring hotel to make a hearty dinner previous to my partaking of her ladyship's splendid breakfast.

"The attention of a new-comer," says Johnson, "is

generally struck by the multiplicity of cries that stun him in the streets, and the variety of merchandise and manufactures which the shopkeepers expose on every hand."

Here is an amusing comment from the same Magazine upon the cries of London :—

There is a man at this moment under my window, who cries 'Potatoes' to the very same tune that I remember when Cherries were in season, and it was but yesterday a woman invited the publick to purchase Shrimps to a tune which has invariably been applied to water-cress ; as to spinage and muffins I have so often heard them chanted in D, that I defy any man to know which is which ; matches too, have been transposed to the key of periwinkles, and the cadence which should fall upon 'rare' is now placed upon 'smelts' and 'mackerel' . . . In Radishes—everybody knows that the *bravura* part is on the words 'twenty a penny'; but they swell these notes and shake upon 'radishes.' Sir, we have no ears, else we could not endue such barbarous transpositions. Which must be done by people totally unacquainted with the gamut. You may think lightly, Sir, of this matter, but my family shall starve ere I will buy potatoes cried in the treble cleff, or allow them to eat salad that has been sung out in flats. Soot-ho ! I will allow to be in alt ; the situation of our chimneys justifies this ; but certainly 'dust' ought to be an octave lower . . . Of Water-cresses, I must own, the cry has a most pleasing melancholy which I would not part with for the flippant tone in which we are solicited to purchase cabbage plants . . . 'Hot Cross Buns,' although they occur but once a year, are cried to a tune which has nothing of that melody which should accompany sacred musick. There is a slur upon 'hot,' which destroys the effect and indeed gives the whole an irreverend sound.

This 'Philo-Harmony' goes on to approve of some of the cries, especially 'ground ivy,' and questions "if Handel composed anything like it." The repetition of the word 'ground ivy' both before and after 'come

buy my . . . is both impressive and brilliant.' He admires also 'the sublime thunder' of a chorus of cucumber women in 'a narrow street.'

Bear-baiting had always been a favourite holiday pastime with Londoners, and although Edward III. included it in a proclamation among 'dishonest, trivial, and useless games,' it persisted in its popularity.

Elizabeth took special pleasure in the pastime, and in an account of the festivities at Kenilworth Castle in 1575, there is a description of the bear and dog contests which were included in the entertainment.

Elizabeth's predilection for the sport went even to the extent of ordaining (1591) that Plays should not be given on Thursdays, because bear-baiting and such pastimes had usually been practised on that day. The famous bear Sackerson is mentioned by the bear's great rival, William Shakespeare, in his *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

The Puritan discouraged bull- and bear-baiting; but the sport revived at the Restoration, and reference is made to it by Pepys. The Paris Garden was a favourite place for this recreation.

In Addison's Age the animals fought at Hockley in the Hole near Clerkenwell. The Poet Gay in his *Trivia* says :—

> Experienced men, inured to City ways,
> Need not the calendar to count the days,
> When through the Town with slow and solemn air,
> Led by the nostril, walks the muzzled bear.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Learn hence the periods of the week to name—
> Mondays and Thursdays are the days of game.

The sport was not suppressed until 1835, but

before that time it had lost its favour with the "Quality."

Dress.—Towards the end of the century the revolution in dress had taken place, and London was bidding farewell to the powdered wig, the profusion of lace, the cocked hat brave with gold and silver, the clouded cane, the diamond-hilted sword, and the suspended muff, without which no gentleman's outfit was complete. One regrets the vanished splendour of the beau more than the disappearing monstrous hoops of the fair ladies. It is curious that while muffs were considered quite manly, the umbrella, which was introduced in 1706, was regarded as desperately effeminate at first.

William Hogarth

It was pre-eminently a social London, even if a noisy and unsavoury one, and Johnson was not alone in his intense affection for the Town and its life. Cavendish Square and its surrounding streets arose during this time, and Islington was connected with London by the dismal links of the Euston and Pentonville Roads. The crop of buildings that arose soon put an end to the view which London had enjoyed hitherto of the heights of Hampstead, but the passage way between Edgware Road and "The Angel" vastly relieved the congestion of traffic.

Gower Street, one of the dreariest neighbourhoods in London, was a picturesque and romantic place in these times. There was a farmhouse—Capper's Farm—in the Tottenham Court Road; a desolate patch of ground called "The Field of Forty Footsteps," redolent of duels, where now stands University College; and the fruit gardens of the neighbourhood were famous.

Violence indeed is the key-note of the social life. It permeates every grade of society, and people become, as might be expected, rougher and grimmer as we descend in the social scale. With such an example as was set by the boisterous spirits of certain notorious Clubs, and with a system of Jurisdiction so grossly inefficient, it is no wonder that the eighteenth century is a century of mob rioting, culminating in the appalling Gordon Riots in 1780. In these Riots—the last popular expression of religious fanaticism, for political feeling takes its place in the next century—the whole city was paralyzed for two days by the behaviour of a huge clamorous mob. Prisons were broken open, churches and houses burned and looted, and there was no safety for the peaceful citizen until the military came upon the scene.

Throughout the eighteenth century the circumstances which led a man like Pepys to jot down the day-to-day happenings of quite ordinary folk operated more and more widely. The consequences upon the pages of the *Spectator* have already been considered.

But literature was not the only Art influenced. The painter and the draughtsman were similarly affected. A genre art arose which illuminated life in eighteenth-century London as vividly as the pens of Addison and Steele themselves. Incidentally, the circumstances permitted the rise of the first great English painter—William Hogarth.

Hogarth was a Londoner of Londoners. He was born in London, according to the register of births at St. Bartholomew's Church, Smithfield, "in Barth^w. Closte, next doore to Mr. Downinge's the Printer's; November ye 10th, 1697."

About 1712 Hogarth was apprenticed to a "silver-

plate engraver" named Ellis Gamble, whose place of business was at the "Golden Angel" in Cranbourne Street, Leicester Fields. A shopcard engraved by the future painter is still extant, which shows the Angel of the Sign poising a great palm branch above the announcement that Mr. Gamble "Makes, Buys, and Sells all sorts of Plate, Rings, and Jewells," or as the accompanying French version puts it, "Fait, Achete et Vend toutes sortes d'Argenterie, Bagues, & Bijouxs, etc."

Here William Hogarth learnt his craftsmanship, but his appointed life's work began when he published his satirical print "The Taste of the Town," with its sharp criticism of the opera craze, the masquerade craze, and the like. Incidentally, fun was poked at such a man as the painter Kent, who appears above the gates of Burlington House, enthroned between Raphael and Michael Angelo.

The wholesale pirating of the "Taste of the Town" led Hogarth to turn his attention to small oil-paintings. But the public would not be denied. When the six paintings known as "A Harlot's Progress" were finished in September 1731, a set of engravings was deemed essential. Twelve hundred names were entered upon the list of subscribers, at a guinea a set, and Hogarth's reputation was secure.

Nowadays the critical custom is to lay stress upon the great qualities of Hogarth as a painter. The beauty of his brilliant and harmonious colour schemes is insisted upon. The power with which he translated dramatic action into rhythmic lines and telling masses of light and shade rightly arouses more enthusiasm than his gifts as a pictorial moralist.

But these were not the qualities which eighteenth-century London valued in the art of William Hogarth.

With Lamb they saw that Hogarth's pictures were to be "read" rather than "looked at." The painter himself asked that his work should be criticized as representations upon the stage are criticized. "I have endeavoured," he writes, "to treat my subject as a dramatic writer; my picture is my stage and men and women my players who, by means of certain actions and gestures, are to exhibit a dumb show."

Judged from Hogarth's own standpoint, what a deep insight into the darker side of London life is afforded by a collection of the engravings. Any of the series would serve for the purpose of illustration —"The Rake's Progress," the originals of which are now in Sir John Soane's Museum; "Marriage à la Mode" in the National Gallery; or the Election series also in the Lincoln Inn Field's Museum.

One is not surprised that so notorious an institution as the lottery should engage Hogarth's attention. Indeed, *The Lottery*, published in 1721 at 1s. a copy, was one of the earliest of the satirical plates. The strange thing is that a theme which offered so many chances to an engraver of Hogarth's talent, did not tempt the painter into designing a complete series of designs after the manner of "A Rake's Progress" or "Marriage à la Mode." It will be remembered that the institution furnished Henry Fielding with material for his play *The Lottery*, written in 1732.

Long before the eighteenth century, however, the lottery was an accepted method for obtaining funds for public purposes in London. The first on record dates from the early years of the reign of good Queen Bess —from 1566 to 1569, to be accurate. As the official announcements quaintly put it: "The same lotterie is erected by Her Majestie's order to the intent that such

commodotie as may chance to arise thereof, after the charges borne, may be converted to the reparation of the havens and strength of the Realme, and towards such other publique good workes." It, therefore, needs no strong flight of imagination to see a goodly portion of the £200,000 received from this lottery going towards the building of the stout little vessels which secured the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

In 1721, when Hogarth published *The Lottery*, a penalty of £500 was the punishment for carrying on a private lottery. The community had determined to keep the whole profit for the public use. In 1721 the Government was able to raise no less than £700,000 by this means.

Perhaps it was the general impression that in the case of lotteries the end justified the means, which prevented Hogarth from discovering the fund of tragedy and comedy connected with the institution. The conception of gambling as a vice was evidently not general in seventeenth and eighteenth century London. And, after all, the British Museum came to us in that way.

To return to Hogarth's paintings. In the life-tragedy of Mary Hackabout, in "The Harlot's Progress," more than individuals can be recognized. The girl is discovered being beaten in Bridewell Gaol.

Thousands of Londoners had been in the place. Indeed, a passage quoted from *London Spy* by Ashton suggests that a trip through Bridewell was regarded as an accepted entertainment in the eighteenth-century London. Doubtless, the modern equivalent would be a pass for the Mint or a permit to view the storerooms of the Bank of England. Here is the passage :—

From thence we turned to the women's apartments. We followed our noses and walked up to take a view of their ladies, who we found were shut up as close as Nuns; but, like so many slaves, were under the care and direction of an overseer, who walked about with a very flexible weapon of offence, to correct such Hempen journey-women who were unhappily troubled with the spirit of idleness.

Not a word of the horror which such sights would arouse in the heart of a twentieth-century spectator!

Nor was this all. The visitors go on to the first quadrangle of the gaol, and ascend "a pair of stairs into a spacious chamber, where the Court was sat in great grandeur and order · a grave gentleman, whose awful looks bespoke him some honourable citizen, being mounted in the judgment-seat, armed with a hammer like a 'Change broker at Lloyd's Coffee-house."

Why? The writer proceeds to explain. A woman was under the lash in the next room, the folding doors of which were opened that the whole Court might view the punishment. "At last down went the Hammer, and the scourging ceased."

The facts themselves are awful enough. But to the modern mind an even more cruel feature is the callous publicity accorded to them.

Another of Hogarth's prints—that depicting the advent of the lazy apprentice beneath Tyburn Tree—shows that an execution was even more "public" than the punishment of offending womanhood.[1]

It has been estimated that between 1196 and 1753 fifty thousand people were executed at Tyburn. It was only when the Tyburn district commenced to become a fashionable quarter that an agitation against

[1] The London of this time has been called "The City of the Gallows." No theatrical performance excelled the popularity of the public execution—especially in the case of "romantic villains like Jack Sheppard."

the publicity of executions, and the equally public processions before executions, was started. An old Tory like Dr. Johnson thundered against the proposal—"The age is running after innovation; all the business of the world is to be done in a new way. Tyburn itself is not safe from the fury of innovation! No, Sir! it is not an improvement; they object that the old method drew together a number of spectators. Sir, executions are intended to draw the spectators."

Strange that the kindly Doctor could not realize the degrading and brutalizing effect of these shows upon the popular mind. Perhaps nothing marks the transition from eighteenth to nineteenth and twentieth century London more clearly than the realization of this coarse brutality. The darker side of Hogarthian and Johnsonian London is painfully apparent. But we must beware of exaggerating the blackness. The real difference may lie in the fact that our ancestors did not fear to display everything. To-day there are many things we prefer to hide. There may be less vice and cruel hardship in the London of to-day—I would not care to dogmatize on the matter. But certainly it is less manifest.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LONDON OF FRANCIS PLACE AND DICKENS

> It is not by the monk in his cell, or the saint in his closet, but by the valiant worker in humble sphere and in dangerous days, that the landmarks of liberty are pushed forward.
>
> W. R. GREG.

> The Old order changeth, yielding place to new.
>
> TENNYSON.

THAT clear-headed, persistent, unselfish man, Francis Place, may well serve to remind us of the social and political upheaval in the earlier years of nineteenth-century London. What William Cobbett strove for in the case of the agricultural poor, Francis Place, tailor and democrat, achieved on behalf of the industrial population of the City. Born in 1771, dying in 1854, his activities cover the period of the Industrial Revolution and the scarcely less momentous Revolution of 1832. Many men have loomed more prominently in the public eye; but no man took a more active share in organizing and educating his fellow-workers than Place. Quiet, unobtrusive, self-forgetful, patient, enormously industrious, he, beyond other men, is the one perhaps to whom the London working man owes the heaviest debt of gratitude.

The claims of Dickens are too obvious for comment. There is no richer storehouse for the historian of the

future, who wishes to reconstruct the late Georgian and Early Victorian London, than that afforded by the stories of Dickens.

Both Place and Dickens sprang from the people, and worked their way up with indomitable pluck to a position of comparative affluence. Peculiarly, therefore, may they be regarded as spokesmen for that awakening democracy, which is the most remarkable phenomenon of the period.

And if Place typifies rather what the poorer classes *thought*, Dickens represents what they *felt*. Place, like his successor Kingsley, reminds us that the poor man has a head; Dickens emphasizes the fact that he has a heart. Give us political rights, says Place; and recognize our moral claims, adds Dickens.

Dickens was not a social reformer so much as a social force. Place was first and foremost a social reformer. Indirectly, no doubt, Dickens influenced the condition of the Elementary and Private Schools, and helped to abolish the breed of Stiggins (Chadband was a tougher customer to kill); and especially the Gamp and Prig genus. But it is his 'extensive and peculiar knowledge' of the domesticities of the lower middle class which makes him so invaluable a reference. No better phrase was ever applied to him than Bagehot's 'special London correspondent for posterity.'

The work of Place must be sought for in the History of the Reform Bill, of Mechanics' Institutes, especially in the Annals of Trade Unionism.

Something has been said of the gloomy social conditions which prevailed at the close of the eighteenth century. Yet the old adage that it is darkest before the dawn is frequently illustrated in human history, and it is certain that just when the condition of London

looked the blackest, when dull apathy marked one class, ignorant brutality another, when the inefficiency of our criminal code could be matched only by its savagery, there arose a band of Reformers—and the Dawn.

John Howard inaugurated the work of Prison Reform; Bentham and Romilly purified the Criminal Laws; Cobbett and Place fought for Political Re-adjustment; Robert Owen and the Factory Reformers strove for social amelioration.

London, like the rest of England, was passing through a time of travail. Men such as Wesley had done much to make us realize our responsibilities as Citizens, had stirred the stagnant emotions into life; but the Industrial Revolution made so powerful an appeal to fierce egoistic instincts, that the work of these eighteenth-century Reformers was well-nigh swept away. The first fifty years of the nineteenth century is one huge battlefield where reformers and reactionaries contend together for the happiness of the people. For we must not lose sight of the fact that the awakening of the masses is the great outstanding feature of the time.

The two reactionary influences at the dawn of the new century were the two great Revolutions. The Industrial Revolution, while aggravating the symptoms of distress, had appealed strongly to the baser instincts of the commercial classes. The French Revolution had created a distaste for progressive measures in the minds of timid statesmen.

It became increasingly clear, however, that the absurdly unrepresentative character of the popular assembly could not continue. And until the House was reformed, as Cobbett clearly pointed out, it was

useless for the poor man to expect a better state of things for himself. By means of his vigorous and racy pen (he was the first newspaper editor to make the Press a democratic force) Cobbett strove for Reform. Place, ineffective as a writer, in his own quiet, methodical, level-headed way, played the less picturesque part of the organizer behind the scenes.

What was the condition of social London at the close of the War in 1815?

The middle-class citizen groaned under the burden of heavy taxation; but after all, it was he who had already begun to reap some of the advantages of the Industrial Revolution. To the wage-earning classes the new wealth accruing from the vast increase of manufactures meant little. On the whole, the one best off at the close of the war was the country gentleman; for every manufacturing improvement had tended to raise rents.

The cessation of the war brought little alleviation, and the industrial population was in a worse position even than before. Why was this? Because the war had drawn upon the labour market, and although the demand for soldiers and sailors makes for unproductive labour, yet the onus of this would affect only immediately the more prosperous citizens. At the close of the war these men got thrown back on the labour market at a time when capital was very scarce. The result of this is obvious.

The years from 1815 to 1832 were very bleak years in the annals of the London poor. During this time Francis Place, by his extraordinary capacity for work and self-improvement, had amassed not only a fair fortune, but qualified himself for the task of educating

his fellow-workers, and giving practical assistance to the reforming zeal of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill. And, if we look round London during this time we shall note how many progressive agencies are at work.

At Charing Cross, Francis Place had his famous library—a library of pamphlets, journals, books, Parliamentary Reports, memoranda on every kind of political and social subject—all tucked away at the back of his shop. It is hard to overestimate the influence of this library in the political life of the time: "My library," says Place, "was a sort of gossiping shop for such persons as were in any way engaged in public matters having the benefit of the people for their object. No one who knew me would hesitate to consult with me on any subject on which I could either give or procure information." To this shop came the leading politicians of the time, ready to avail themselves of Place's industry and method; and not merely to consult his books but to confer with the man: for Place knew better than any other the character and spirit of the men for whom the radical politicians of the time wished to legislate. The shop and library was a centre for gossip and consultation much as the coffee-house of Queen Anne's reign had been for the politicians of that time. Seventy volumes from the "Place Manuscripts" are now in the British Museum.

Meanwhile Cobbett, in his breezy, downright way, was convincing the working classes that the way out of their troubles was not by violent rioting, but by sound legislation. From the present Parliament, timid, reactionary, and largely corrupt, nothing was to be hoped. Therefore, urged Cobbett, along with Place, we must have Parliamentary Reform. The cause of Prison Reform had been taken up by Mrs. Fry, and

much of her work was done during these years. She had first visited a prisoner in Newgate in 1813, and found all the general prisoners, young and old, experienced criminals and first offenders, crowded together indiscriminately. She found the place an Inferno—tenanted by a mob of howling, swearing, fighting creatures. To tame such savages, to educe any order out of the chaos, seemed hopeless. She did a little to alleviate their wants, but it was not till three years later that she started resolutely the work of cleansing these Augean Stables. "Within a month," it is said, "the place was transformed . . . the wild beasts were tamed." Finally, Robert Owen brought to London, about 1813, the end of the 'New View of Society,' which we may regard as the starting-point of modern Socialism. He and Place were great friends.

While Place, Cobbett, Owen, and Elizabeth Fry were working in their various ways, Dickens, born in one of the stormiest of years, 1812, was spending his unhappy boyhood in London (1822-1824), and passing through experiences which were to inspire him throughout his life, in the cause of suffering and privation wherever he might find it.

Here again, it is interesting to note a point in common between Place and Dickens. In each case boyhood had meant an age of misery and suffering, and in each case the man of mature years, and of affluent circumstances, could recall every detail of that terrible time. The hardships of Place were perhaps severer, certainly more prolonged; on the other hand, Dickens had the more sensitive organization.

What of the literary influences brought to bear upon London between 1812 and 1832?

Coleridge on the crest of Highgate Hill was delivering himself in brilliant monologues on philosophical and metaphysical subjects, stirring the imagination of ardent churchmen like Frederick Denison Maurice, and half attracting and half repelling the youthful Carlyle.

Important years these for the Church of England, for Coleridge was instrumental in sowing seeds of thought which afterwards fructified in the High Church and Broad Church Movements.

Already, earlier in the century (1803-1810), had De Quincey found a rare imaginative stimulus in 'stony-hearted Oxford Street'; and when Dickens was passing through his days of youthful tribulation, *The Confessions of an Opium Eater* (1821) were being discussed by literary London. Hazlitt was drawing large audiences in Bloomsbury for his philosophical lectures; at a later date he was discoursing on Poetry at the Surrey Institute. Between 1820 and 1823 a series of charming, intimate Essays were running through a Magazine called *London*, rich in allusiveness to the City and its ways. Their author, 'Elia,' was at this time living in Covent Garden. Even more fully in his correspondence than his essays did Lamb mirror the tastes and idiosyncrasies of the man whose soul is possessed by the magic of London. Fleet Street had no doughtier champion than he and Johnson.

Somewhat earlier, between 1809 and 1817, were the famous Wednesday evenings at the Inner Temple, where a distinguished little company were wont to foregather: Wordsworth, 'a right, good, old steel-grey figure,' as Carlyle called him at a later date, yet always somewhat stiff and unprepossessing in manner; the eloquent, declamatory, and corpulent Coleridge;

Hazlitt, attentive and keen-eyed, not talkative, but clear and pointed whenever he broke in upon the conversation; here also might you meet sallow-looking and silvery-toned De Quincey; while in the background, humorous and whimsical in his comments, yet unobtrusively attentive to the physical needs of his guests in the direction of cold roast beef and porter, was the host, Charles Lamb.

Amidst the rural beauties of Hampstead, with a mind undistracted by the Napoleonic struggle, dwelt Keats, chief of the foolishly termed "Cockney School." The son of a livery stable keeper at Moorfields, he wrote his famous sonnet, 'On First Looking into Chapman's Homer,' amidst the noise of the City. Later on, at Hampstead, the brief interview between him and Coleridge took place, after which Coleridge remarked, 'There is death in that hand.'

In a picturesque little grove known as 'Well Walk,' *Endymion* and *The Eve of St. Agnes* were written; and here could be heard the nightingale, whose song he immortalized in his magnificent ode.

In those days green meadowland divided Hampstead from Belsize Park and Kilburn, and across these fields would Leigh Hunt, Keats, and Shelley often ramble together.

Closely associated as were all these men with London life, Lamb and Hunt alone mirror in their writings the ways of the Town. Wordsworth cared little for London and (one fine sonnet excepted) owed little to its inspiration. Circumstances drove Coleridge townwards, but at heart he was somewhat of a bohemian, despite the preaching propensities which his best friend Lamb humorously bemoaned.

The cultured Londoner of the day, who was fortu-

nate enough to be of the audience, would not forget readily those lectures on Shakespeare, which have survived for us only in brilliant fragments; nor would he fail to appreciate the more incisive if less profound discourses of Hazlitt. Of Coleridge's theological influence I have spoken already.

Keats, whose human sympathies were warm and ready, would, had he lived, no doubt have been swept into the life and problems of his day. As it is, we are always in a beautiful garden with him; never once does he go out into the streets and mingle with the crowd.

The iris-coloured verse of Shelley, on the other hand, is shot with the purple of his suffering age. *The Masque of Anarchy*, published in the year of the Reform Act, and inspired by the Peterloo Massacre at Manchester, contains a trumpet-call to those struggling for political freedom in the City. And crude as was much of the political philosophy which he borrowed from Godwin, it contained none the less some deep and noble truths, which the genuine reformer of every age will ever hold dear.

Kingsley, a schoolboy at Bristol, had his first taste of the social unrest of the time when he witnessed the fierce riots in that city (1831-32) at the time of the Reform Bill.

And this brings us to a scene in London History which is reminiscent in many respects of the scene about two hundred years before, when Charles fell foul of the wishes of the London citizens.

The death of George IV. in June 1830, and the accession of William IV., had put fresh heart into the Reform party. The new King was known to be sympathetic to Reform, and although the Duke of

Wellington declared emphatically against any alteration in the Representation, he and his ministry were defeated and Grey and the Reform party called upon. Before the new Government met in February, and while they were preparing the Reform measure, riots took place in London, while from the unrepresented towns petitions poured into Parliament, praying for Reform.

The Rotunda in Blackfriars Road was a favourite spot for popular meetings. Genuine reformers and opportunistic demagogues made the most of the crisis. As against the sober and thoughtful work of such men as Place, we have the violent appeals to mob passion of men like Orator Hunt. Hunt and his colleagues made much of the tri-colour flag (so greatly in evidence, of course, in the '30 Revolution in Paris), and shouts were raised 'For the West End!' The mob, inflamed by Hunt's facile rhetoric, surged over Blackfriars Bridge, shouting out 'Reform'—'No Wellington.' The police were sufficiently strong to prevent their storming the House of Commons, and during this day, Monday, November 1, and the next day, the rioters though threatening and violent were held in check. The New Police[1] were far more effectual than the Old, as was sufficiently proved on this occasion. One wonders what would have happened had there been so inept an organization as in the riots of 1780. However, in the evening of Tuesday, the Strand was not a pleasant place for travellers. Every coach was stopped, and passengers compelled to wave their hats for Reform; and the mob was especially violent in Chancery Lane, where they pelted the police with stones.

Round Apsley House, in Piccadilly, where lived the

[1] A Force created under the direct control of the Home Secretary—London being mapped out into Police Districts under Justices of the Peace, and in 1839 Commissioners.

stubborn old Duke, another mob hooted to their 'hearts' content, though the police kept them from doing much mischief. And till late in the evening there were tumultuous gatherings in Bethnal Green and Whitechapel.

When later on the Lords had thrown out the Bill, Peers were insulted and maltreated in the streets, and order became increasingly difficult to keep.

There is no need to retell here the familiar old story of the Reform Bill, and of the uncompromising attitude of the House of Lords. It is sufficient to say that, when in May 1832 the Peers managed to bludgeon the Bill to death for the second time, the Government resigned, and the Duke of Wellington was called upon by the King to form a ministry.

But the hero of Waterloo could not subdue his own nation. He undertook to quiet the country in ten days—and failed. Meanwhile, all eyes were fixed on London, and anxious people waited about the mail roads for miles on the watch for news. Huge reform meetings pledged themselves to pay no taxes until the Bill was passed. The King capitulated and gave permission for the creation of "such a number of Peers as will be sufficient to ensure the passing." But there was no necessity for this step.

The Lords realized the temper of the nation. The Duke and his friends retired sullenly, and the Bill became the law of the land on January 7, 1832. Viewed from the standpoint of to-day, it seems to us a very mildly progressive measure. Certainly the radical democrats of the day were frankly disappointed with it. But it was progressive—that was the great thing. The Middle Classes at last were fairly represented; those less fortunately placed had yet to wait for recognition.

None saw this more clearly than Francis Place. He was not enamoured of Parliamentary legislation at any time, and had the strong, individualistic dislike of government interference peculiar to the Benthamite School of Politicians. He continually urged upon his comrades the primary necessity for educating themselves for political work. He wished the poor to contribute to the education of their children as best they could. Above all, he desired to see them self-respecting. To help to effect this he established a London Mechanic's Institution in 1823, which at a later time came under the superintendence of Dr. Birkbeck, and is to-day a flourishing educational agency. There was nothing of the demagogue Hunt about Place. Claptrap and rhetorical generalities he abominated. He found his neighbours not "too clamorous," he says, but "too tame and quiescent. Fear, the child of ignorance, creates bugbears, our business should be to dispel fear and put reason in its place."

Place and other Benthamite Radicals joined hands with working-men democrats in protesting against the insufficiency of the Reform Act, and demanding universal suffrage, vote by ballot, and other points which formed the staple of the Chartist's cry in the forties. Yet it was clearly seen by all but the dullest, that unsatisfactory as Russell's measure might seem, yet it signalized the turn of the tide. The House of Commons was no longer an oligarchy.

More important even than his share in Reform Movement and in Educational matters, were the valiant and successful efforts of Place in 1824 to secure the repeal of the iniquitous Combination Laws. A series of measures had been enacted between 1761 and 1799, with the object of regulating wages, which

forbade combination in any trade whatever. These laws, by the exertions of Place, aided by Hume, Burdett, and Hobhouse were swept away, despite the rigorous opposition of Huskisson and Peel.

After the Reform Act, Place parted company with the Whigs, and devoted his energies mainly to the Working Class Movement, which led to the Chartist Movement, and along with William Lovett and others he formulated the People's Charter.

While numbers of the later Chartists favoured physical force methods, the earlier history of the movement is remarkable for the sobriety and moral fervour of its leaders. Lovett, Hetherington, Vincent, Place, these are the spokesmen of the movement. Henry Vincent was a fine orator who did stalwart service also in the struggle for a Free Press, and many an impassioned speech was given to eager radicals on Clerkenwell Green. Henry Hetherington, less of an orator than Vincent, was a man of considerable dialectical power. His name is connected with *The Poor Man's Guardian*, established contrary to law to try the power of Right against Might (1830). William Lovett, a sensitive Cornishman who came early to London to seek his fortune, had the same passion for self-education and for the improvement of his fellows as had stimulated Place. Like Place, moreover, he showed a great aptitude for organization. It was Lovett who first sketched the People's Charter, which was revised by Roebuck. He was also the first to draw up and send to Parliament a petition for opening Museums and Art Galleries on Sundays. While in prison at Warwick Gaol (for having protested against the arbitrariness of the Government in putting down public meetings in

Birmingham by London policemen), he published a scheme of political education for the people. These men—self-respecting working men one and all—did a splendid work in fashioning and preparing the eager but rough, undisciplined democracy clamouring for recognition.

Leaving these London radical movements for a while, let us see what Charles Dickens is doing.

Before the Reform Act was passed, his apprenticeship to letters had been served, and in the autumn of 1833 the young journalist has stealthily dropped his first manuscript into "a dark letter-box, in a dark office, up a dark Court in Fleet Street." It was the office of the *Monthly Magazine* in Johnson Court. Merely a farcical sketch this *Dinner at Poplar Walk*, yet even in this crude beginning may we find hints of that astounding observation of certain social types which give his writings so rare a value. Grub Street is to play its part in the great democratic movement. And the new reforming genius carries with him a gift too rare among reformers — the priceless gift of humour. Others were to scold their countrymen into repentance. Dickens elected to laugh at our weaknesses, and to shame us that way.

When he began to write, the humanitarian reforms urged by Bentham and his friends had done something to mitigate the savagery of the late century. In 1832 sheep-stealing and forgery were no longer visited with the death penalty. Hanging in chains was abolished in 1834, the pillory, the stocks, the ducking stool, symbols of a brutal age, vanished shortly afterwards. And in 1841 capital punishment was reserved for

, murder only. The new Gaol Acts of 1844, largely inspired by Howard and Elizabeth Fry, transformed the condition of the prisons. But there was a great deal yet to be accomplished; — and much of what remained is faithfully mirrored in the stories of Dickens,—the deplorable state of the Debtors' Prison, the Fleet, and the Marshalsea; the dismal abysses of elementary education; the sorry type of nurses available in sickness; the oppression of little children; the prevalence of religious hypocrisy;—these, and many other dark corners in the life of London, were illuminated by the searchlight of his genius.

A barbarous survival not abolished until just before Dickens' death was the Public Execution. And few did more to bring about its abolition than Dickens. He was present at the execution of the Mannings in 1849, and the disgusting horror moved him to write thus :—

I believe that a sight so inconceivably awful as the wickedness and levity of the immense crowd collected at that execution could be imagined by no man, and could be presented in no heathen land under the sun. The horror of the gibbet and the crime which brought the wretched murderers to it faded in my mind before the atrocious bearing, look, and language of the assembled spectators. When I came upon the scene at midnight, the shrillness of the cries and howls that were raised from time to time, denoting that they came from a concourse of boys and girls already assembled in the best places, made my blood run cold. As the night went on, screeching and laughing and yelling in strong chorus of parodies on negro melodies with substitution of Mrs. Manning for Susannah, and the like, were added to these. When the day dawned, thieves, low prostitutes, ruffians and vagabonds of every kind, flocked on to the ground, with every variety of offensive and foul behaviour. Fightings, faintings, whistlings, imitations of Punch, brutal

jokes, tumultuous demonstrations of indecent delight when swooning women were dragged out of the crowd by the police with their dresses disordered, gave a new zest to the general entertainment. When the Sun rose brightly, as it did, it gilded thousands upon thousands of upturned faces inexpressibly odious in their brutal mirth or callousness, that a man had cause to feel ashamed of the shape he wore, and to shrink from himself; as fashioned in the image of the devil. When the two miserable creatures who attracted all this ghastly sight about them were turned quivering into the air, there was no more emotion, no more pity, no more thought that two immortal souls had gone to judgment, no more restraint in any of the previous obscenities, than if the name of Christ had never been heard of in this world, and there were no belief among men, but that they perished like the beasts; I have seen habitually some of the worst scenes of general contamination and corruption in this country, and I think there are not many phases of London life that could surprise me. I am solemnly convinced that nothing that ingenuity could devise to be done in this City in the same compass of time could work such ruin as one public execution.

Greenwich is closely associated with the merry-makings of London. It was a favourite resort of the Tudor sovereigns. Here did poor Anne Boleyn pass the few happy months of her married life, and here was Elizabeth born. At Greenwich Sir Walter Raleigh, after a successful campaign in Ireland, was introduced to the Queen, and proved himself as skilful a courtier as a soldier.

James and Charles found Greenwich an equally pleasant place for festivities; but after the Civil War it ceased to attract the Sovereigns of England, and throughout the eighteenth century becomes a place more for the people. Greenwich Fair was a great institution in the early days of Dickens and Thackeray.

Thackeray refers to it in his *Sketches and Travels of London*, and it forms the subject of one of the *Sketches by Boz*.

"If the parks be the lungs of London," comments Dickens, "we wonder what Greenwich Fair is—a periodical breaking out I suppose; a sort of Spring rash; a three days' fever which cools the blood for six months afterwards, and at the expiration of which London is restored to its old habit of plodding industry as suddenly and as completely as if nothing had ever occurred to disturb them."

The grotesquerie of Dickens has furnished his critics with matter for eulogy and for disparagement. Whatever opinions we may hold as to such pleasant cranks as Newman Noggs, such lovable oddities as Tom Pinch, or such unpleasant eccentricities as Quilp, it is undeniable that in the earlier years of Dickens the streets of London abounded in richly eccentric characters. They may be found to-day; but London does not overflow with them as it did in Dickens's time. The School Boards have hammered much excellent common sense into the poorer classes, but in the process no few picturesque excrescences and amusing foibles have been planed away. New types have arisen, and on the whole (as we may see in the pages of Mr. H. G. Wells, for instance) a hard, flippant precocity has taken the place of many of the curious angular peculiarities of the Victorian poorer class Englishmen.

I know, it may be said, that it wants a Dickens to see the Dickens types; and, that were Dickens alive to-day, his Kipps and 'Enery Straker would differ in their fundamental humanity from the characters of Wells and Shaw.

Up to a point, no doubt, this is true; but it would

be unfair to the creator of Kipps and Bert Smallways, to deny that changes have taken place.[1]

Again, whilst Dickens had an especial fondness for delineating crazy and half-witted men and women, their prevalence in his pages is no little due to the effects of the terrible Factory System, so especially apparent in his earlier years; due, also, to the fact that half-witted creatures were allowed to roam about more freely in his day than ours. Whether they are numerically fewer is another question altogether. Their interest for us in the pages of Dickens lies in the tender and tolerant humour with which they are treated, and in the suggestion of a treatment of these poor souls, accepted by most of us to-day, but by no means common in Dickens's day, as those who are acquainted with the judicial attitude towards the insane will testify.

Just as the verses of Pope and the admonitions of Addison reflect accurately the attitude of the Age towards women; so in the pages of Pickwick, of Chuzzlewit, of Copperfield, we may gain an idea of the position of women in Dickens's day, and the type of women chiefly admired. Save in a few rare instances, you may date a novelist by his heroines. Ruth Pinch and Amelia Sedley reflect as clearly early Victorian ideals as Dorothea Casaubon and Clara Middleton do later Victorian. There are times when Dickens, like Shakespeare, delves in human nature below the fashion and manners of the period, and his characters triumph by their fidelity to certain universal qualities of human nature. Of such are Betsey Trotwood, Joe Gargery, and, we may add, eccentricities

[1] How rich still is the crude material for the humorous and sympathetic observer may be judged from the writings to-day of Messrs. Pett Ridge, Edwin Pugh, and Richard Whiteing.

like Mrs. Gamp, Dick Swiveller, Micawber, who, despite their early Victorian vesture, have immortal souls.

But with this side of Dickens we are not concerned here. It is for us to note how far his writings illustrate the London of his day.

In the earlier novels we are in the London of Coachdom, and few incidents suited the nervous, vivid style of the writer better than the description of a Coach ride. He was peculiarly happy in conveying the sense of motion; no one has excelled him in pourtraying the hardy joys and multifarious discomforts of a coach ride. For the lighter side of travel one turns to the journeys of Samuel Pickwick and of Tom Pinch; the less pleasing aspects are touched upon in *Nicholas Nickleby*. One of the most remarkable descriptions of a journey in a snowstorm occurs in the "Holly Tree Inn."

Every century the cry had gone up of the bad roads and the uncertainty of the coaches. During the eighteenth century great improvements had been made in the condition of the roads, and the coaches themselves were made more comfortable. We find a traveller congratulating himself in 1798 upon managing ninety miles in seventeen hours, with breakfast, dinner, and tea, all for the modest sum of £4 : 9 : 6.

At the close of the century nineteen mail coaches left London every night about seven o'clock. They carried the mails and a number of passengers, charged at fourpence a mile. A guard took charge, and carried a protecting blunderbuss for fear of possible Turpins. In these days of speed it is curious to hear of the average rate of mileage to York for a traveller—seven miles an hour, thirty hours in all; or the length of

time which it took a waggon to convey parcels to Edinburgh—three weeks.

The waggon and cart were for parcels; mail coaches, stage coaches, and the posting chaise for the impatient pilgrim.

The early years of the century, well into the thirties, was the great era of Coaches and Inns. The number of Inns was prodigious. In the City and Borough there were one hundred and four; all seemingly sent their coaches, carrier carts, and waggons every day throughout the country.

Here is an account of a coach ride from the Golden Cross—that especially Dickensian Inn—from a writer in 1827:—

> At seven came a coach from the Strand . . . a good-looking tall man in a scarlet frock coat, a drab hat, and white trousers as coachman; four as fine horses as ever I saw. The Guard, a well-dressed man in an olive frock, was playing an air on a keyed bugle horn. . . . Just as he finished, a coach drew up near the Statue, and the Guard, a tall man in a scarlet coat, played on his bugle in excellent style 'The Lass of Richmond Hill.' . . . The fineness of the weather, the uncommon beauty of the horses in all the coaches, the sun shining on their well-groomed skins, the hilarity they seemed to feel, the passengers on the outside gay and happy . . . made the whole exceedingly lively and delightfully animating.

Mr. Pickwick in one of his post-prandial moods could scarcely have taken a more cheerful view. Speaking of the Golden Cross and Pickwick, it is inevitable that we should recall the first meeting with Jingle, which took place here after the famous cab-ride. At that time an arched entrance skirted the front of the Hotel, and connected it with the coach road at the back. Hence the gloomy warning of Jingle to his

new friends: "Heads, heads, take care of your heads . . . terrible place—dangerous work—other day—five children, mother—tall lady eating sandwiches—forgot the arch — crash — knock — children look round — mother's head off—sandwich in her hand, no mouth to put it in—head of a family off—shocking, shocking!"

It was at the Golden Cross, moreover, that David first chanced on Steerforth and was disturbed in his dreams next morning by the 'early morning coaches rumbling out of the archway underneath, what made him dream of thunder and the Gods.'

The Post Chaise, of course, was a more exclusive means of travelling. It served well for exciting adventures as readers of Smollett and Dickens are well aware. Especially is the chaise connected with runaway couples.

In the winter of 1828-29 the Omnibus lumbers into view, and 'Hansom's Patent Cab' appeared in 1834. In the early cabs the driver sits by the side of the passenger. In the opening of 'Pickwick,' just referred to, we have a pleasing introduction to the Cabman of the day.

Many of the great London Railway lines were established in the thirties. London and Birmingham, 1833; London and Greenwich, 1833; London and Southampton, 1834; London and Croydon, 1835; Great Western, 1835; South Eastern, 1836; Eastern Counties, 1836; London and Brighton, 1837. Then came a pause. 1846 saw the Great Northern, but not till the early sixties did the London, Chatham and Dover, and the Midland make their appearance. The railway accident at Staplehurst, in which Dickens was involved, although not injured (1865), in no small measure contributed to the breakdown of his nervous system. At the time, however, he was not in the least

disturbed. Several of his shorter stories deal with the railways; their humours and romance, *e.g. Mugby Junction*, and in *Dombey and Son* he kills off the villainous Carker by aid of a convenient train. On the whole, however, considering how familiar he must have been with railway travelling, it is remarkable what little use he makes of the romance of steam. For him "romance brings up" the Coach, not Kipling's "7.15."

The introduction of railway travel was greeted with much the same derision as greeted the motors lately. In fact, this is the tale of every innovation. First of all contempt and derision; then grudging acceptance; then the innovation passes into the everyday occurrence, and is accepted as inevitably as the stars in their courses. Then with the next innovation come the same outcries. The most absurd protest on record in London Life is, I think, that uttered on the lighting of the streets at night in Charles's day.

A *Quarterly Review* in 1825 was very angry at the suggestion that the locomotive might go at twice the speed of stage coaches. "The gross exaggeration of the powers of the locomotive . . . may delude for a time, but must end in the mistification of those most concerned." The writer shudders at the thought of trusting himself "to the mercy of such a machine going at such a rate"—that is, a wild and terrible fifteen miles an hour!

One is reminded of a Proclamation about two hundred years earlier which forbad hackney coaches in London to travel more than three miles an hour, because they "pestered the streets, broke up the pavements, and made walking dangerous."

We have come, moreover, to the era of the Penny Post (1840) and to the introduction of Gas.

Gas, introduced in 1792, took the place of the old oil lamps in the general lighting of London during the Christmas of 1814. But the aristocrats of Grosvenor Square continued to burn oil for another twenty years; and for many years the London clergy declared the introduction of gas into churches to be "profane and contrary to God's law."

The Club was emerging from a rendezvous into an institution. The old Clubs had been Coffee-houses; the New Clubs provided members with all the advantages of an hotel, a fine library, and a place for recreation. The United Service Club was founded in 1819, for the benefit of the half-pay officer who had retired on the conclusion of Peace. In 1823 the Athenæum came into existence. Crabb Robinson's reference to it as "a genteel establishment" seems not inappropriate; it did not appeal to him, however, as a dining place.

While Place and his fellow workers were trying to educate and uplift the poorer classes, Dickens was picturing their actual condition—dwelling tenderly upon their shortcomings, making much of the familiar 'touch of nature,' yet not omitting on occasion to paint powerfully and sombrely those darker byways of London Life which he knew so well.

That dismal and wretched institution, The Debtors' Prison, which Dickens did so much to put an end to, is frequently depicted in his writings. It says much for the young author of *Pickwick* that in that book of splendid animal spirits he should find a place for so graphic a pen picture of the Fleet Prison. No less graphic, and more subtle in its maturer delineation, is the description of the Marshalsea in *David Copperfield* and

Little Dorrit. And a lurid picture of its horrors is given in *Hunted Down.*

Defoe long before had spoken of 'that Death in Life':—

> For debt only men are condemned to languish in perpetual imprisonment, and to starve without mercy, and redeemed only by the grave. Kings show mercy to traitors, to murderers and thieves . . . but in debt, and we are lost for this world. We cannot obtain the favour of being hanged or transported, but our lives must linger within the walls till released by the grave; our youth wastes away inactive; grey hairs cover us, and we languish in all the agonies of misery and want, while our wives and children perish from mere hunger, and our creditors see themselves paid by death and time.

Nor was any difference made whether the debtor was unable to pay by reason of unforeseen misfortune or from deliberate folly. The sentence was the same. 'Imprisonment until you can settle; and if you cannot pay, the Prison for Life.'

There were four principal Debtors' Prisons in London—the Fleet, the King's Bench, the Marshalsea, and Ludgate. Of these, the Fleet has received the greatest amount of literary attention, not only the Prison rebuilt in 1781, but the older prison which was destroyed by the Great Fire.

Outside the Fleet of Dickens was an iron-barred window facing Farringdon Street, with the inscription above: "Pray remember the poor prisoner having no allowance," and a small box placed on the window sill received the charity of those who passed by.

Few passages in Dickens's writings are more deservedly familiar than the description of the Fleet Prison in *Pickwick.* How surely and powerfully the scene is actualized before us:—

Here four or five great hulking fellows, just visible through a cloud of tobacco smoke, were engaged in noisy and riotous conversation over half-emptied pots of beer, or playing at 'all-fours' with a very greasy pack of cards. In the adjoining room some solitary tenant might be seen, poring, by the light of a feeble tallow candle, over a bundle of soiled and tattered papers, yellow with dust and dropping to pieces from age, writing for the hundredth time some lengthened statement of his grievances for the perusal of some great man, whose eyes it would never reach or whose heart it would never touch. . . . In the galleries themselves, or more especially on the staircases, there lingered a great number of people, who came there, some because their rooms were empty and lonesome, others because their rooms were full and hot; the greater part because they were restless and uncomfortable, and not possessed of the sense of exactly knowing what to do with themselves. There were many classes here, from the labouring man in his fustian jacket to the broken-down spendthrift in his shawl dressing-gown most appropriately out at elbows; but there was the same air about them all—a listless, jailbird, careless swagger, and vagabondish, who's afraid sort of bearing—which is wholly indescribable in words, but which any man can understand in one moment if he wish, by just setting foot in the nearest Debtors' Prison.

Many tragi-comedies in the past had been associated with the famous Fleet marriages. Although not strictly legal, they were generally recognized as valid. Those strange, gabbled ceremonies hurried over in a dirty Tavern by a red-nosed, dissolute "Fleet Parson." Originally they had been performed in the chapel attached to the Prison, but so considerable was the traffic, that a room in a neighbouring tavern had to suffice. Touting was done on an extensive scale, much as at Doctors' Commons; and many unsuspecting people found what they had fancied a joke turned into a sordid tragedy. The runaway couple naturally

favoured the Fleet, in these cases only probably was there any romance in a Fleet marriage. For the rest, one associates it with shady souls of both sexes, and with trickery.

In May Fair also the disreputable ritual of the Fleet found its counterpart. Parliament presently prohibited these clandestine marriages.

On the site of the Fleet Prison to-day stands the Congregational Memorial Hall.

The Marshal-Sea Prison, Southwark, was for small debts—the debtor must not belong to the City of London, otherwise he may live within a radius of twelve miles. It had been rebuilt in 1811, and Dickens says of it, "Itself a close and confined prison for Debtors it contained within itself a much closer and more confined goal for smugglers." This prison was abolished in 1849.

To the horrible condition of these prisons many writers have testified. Unspeakably revolting in their physical and moral conditions, before the ministrations of Howard and Mrs. Fry, they presented many miserable aspects which cried for improvement even in the day of Dickens. But if one wishes to realize the extent of Howard's work, and those who carried it on, let them compare the accounts of Howard and Fowell Buxton with those given by Dickens.

In *Oliver Twist* there are pictures of Holborn and its neighbourhood before the era of the Viaduct. Field Lane running parallel with Fleet Ditch was a dangerous haunt for criminals. Its site now is business-like and respectable, and there are few more exciting sounds in the neighbourhood than the rattle of the Metropolitan trains outside Farringdon Street.

Formerly, that is in 1837, Dickens described it "as a narrow and dismal alley leading to Saffron Hill. In its filthy shops are exposed for sale huge bunches of pocket-handkerchiefs of all sizes and patterns, for here reside the traders who purchase them from pickpockets . . . the emporium of petty larceny, visited at early morning and setting-in of dusk, by vilest merchants who traffic in dark back parlours and go as strangely as they come."

The wretchedness and filth of the old Smithfield Market (condemned in 1852 to be moved to Islington), are described in the same book, where he makes us realize the rancorous squalidness of the scene on a foggy market morning.

Doctors' Commons.—Doctors' Commons—that medley of Wills and Marriage Licenses, with its ancient legal and ecclesiastical memories,—provided Dickens with one of his delightfully amusing sketches. Who can forget Sam Weller's description of the disreputable touters for licenses who haunted the place :—

They puts things into old gen'lm'n's heads as they never dreamed of. My father, sir, was a coachman, a widdower he wos ; and fat enough for anything—uncommon fat, to be sure. His missus dies, and leaves him four hundred pound. Down he goes to the Commons to see the lawyer, and draw the blunt,—very smart—top-boots on—nosegay in his button-hole —broad-brimmed tile—green shawl—quite the gen'lm'n. . . . Up comes the touter, touches his hat. "Licence, sir, licence?" "What's that?" said my father. "Licence, sir," says he. "What licence?" says my father. "Marriage licence," says the touter. "Dash my weskit," says my father, "I never thought o' that." "I think you wants one, sir," says the touter. My father pulls up and thinks a bit. "No," says he, "damme, I'm too old, b'sides I'm a many sizes too large," says

he. "Not a bit on it, sir," says the touter. "Think not?" says my father. "I'm sure not," says he; "we married a gen'lm'n twice your size on Monday." "Did you, though?" said my father. "To be sure we did," says the touter, "you're a babby to him—this way, sir—this way!" And sure enough my father walks arter him, like a tame monkey behind a horgan, into a little back office, vere a feller sat among dirty papers, and tin boxes, making believe he was busy. "Pray take a seat, vile I makes out the affidavit, sir," says the lawyer. "Thankee, sir," says my father, and down he sat, and stared with all his eyes and his mouth wide open at the names on the boxes. "What's your name, sir?" says the lawyer. "Tony Weller," says my father. "Parish?" says the lawyer. "Belle Savage," says my father; for he stopped there when he drove up, and he know'd nothing about parishes, *he* didn't. "And what's the lady's name?" says the lawyer. My father was struck all of a heap. "Blessed if I know," says he. "Not know!" says the lawyer. "No more nor you do," says my father; "can't I put that in afterwards?" "Impossible!" says the lawyer. "Wery well," says my father, after he'd thought a moment, "put down Mrs. Clarke." "What Clarke?" says the lawyer, dipping his pen in the ink. "Susan Clarke, Markis o' Granby, Dorking," says my father, "she'll have me if I ask, I dessay—I never said nothing to her; but she'll have me, I know." The licence was made out, and she *did* have him, and what's more she's got him now.

Probably Tony Weller was not the only capture effected by the touters.

"He who aspires to be a hero," says Johnson, "must drink brandy."

"Sots are excluded from the best company," wrote Sir Walter Scott in 1825.

These dicta sufficiently indicate public sentiment in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

Despite the fact that there is so much hard drinking mentioned in Dickens, public opinion had veered round

considerably in his day from what it had been under the Georges. Then the legislators of the country would often end the day in glorious carousals; and in the best clubs scenes of intoxication were not only common, but thought nothing of.

Fielding's Squire Western had his City counterpart, who considered no day well rounded off unless he and his guests finished their festivities on the floor. Dickens did not live in the 'three bottle days,' and although there was undoubtedly a good deal of drinking in his day as in ours, I suspect that some of his fictional 'alarums and excursions' were merely literary exuberances on the part of the genial chronicler, who knew so well his Fielding and Smollett.

Assuredly public opinion was different. The condition of the Clubs is a case in point; the drunkard there was the exception, not the rule; and if tolerated for social qualities, was certainly not taken for granted by his fellow Clubmen.

The reader of Dickens will have noted how that the jovial, humorous treatment of intemperance, so marked in his earlier books, suffers a change in course of years. Not only does it figure less frequently in the novels, but its appearance is less frequently accompanied by the stage direction—laughter. The earlier hypocrites are chronic drunkards — Stiggins and Pecksniff, for instance: but Mr. Chadband grows notoriously didactic over tea, and Mr. Pumblechook, if not a pattern of sobriety, is certainly not especially intemperate. And in his last book, the scene, where the two young rivals meet and the limits of temperance are passed, is conceived in quite a serious vein.

It is scarcely necessary to note how temperate a man was Dickens himself. It is characteristic of him that he

should have delighted in preparing punch for others, and have approved it as a symbol of good fellowship; but he was very sparing himself of this Pickwickian standby. There is indeed a plenitude of eating and drinking in the novels of Dickens, especially in the Christmas books. Superior critics sneer at what they called the "Roast Beef and Plum Pudding and plenty to eat message" of Dickens. Perhaps if they would recall the way in which the author had fought his way up from poverty, and how he knew better than most men why those lean jackals — Want and Disease — prowl restlessly and ceaselessly outside the doors of the unfortunate, they would spare their scorn. Dickens knew how barren any message, how futile any gospel must be, which does not recognize the physical needs of men and women and little children. And that is why the Christmas books are, as Thackeray said, "National Benefits."

There is no better guide to Early Victorian London than Charles Dickens. Clubland, and the upper stratum of London Society, are more faithfully pictured by Thackeray by reason of his better knowledge. But for the motley multitude that pour through the streets, for the hole-and-corner places of the City, for London as an incomprehensible, terrifying, fascinating, delightful personality—every brick and stone alive with tragic humour—Dickens remains unrivalled.

Nowhere is this better illustrated than in his acute sensibility to the 'genius of places.'

This, for instance, of Harley Street, from *Little Dorritt*:—

> Like unexceptionable society, the opposing rows of houses in Harley Street were very grim with one another. Indeed, the mansions of their inhabitants were so much alike in that respect, that the people were often to be found drawn up on

opposite sides of dinner tables, in the shade of their own loftiness, staring at the other side of the way with the dullness of the houses. . . . The expression in uniform twenty houses, all to be knocked at and rung at in the same form, all approachable by the same dull steps, all fended off by the same pattern of railing, all with the same unpracticable fire-escapes, the same inconvenient fixtures in their heads, and everything without exception, to be taken at high valuation.

Here you have deadly respectable dulness, a dulness which spread itself over large tracts of Bayswater in Dickens's day, and has now extended in the direction of West Kensington. Contrast with the above the shabby dulness of Lant Street :—

'There is an air of repose about Lant Street in the Borough, which sheds a gentle melancholy on the soul. . . . If a man wished to extract himself from the world, to remove himself from within the reach of temptation, to place himself beyond the possibility of any inducement to look out of the window, he should by all means go to Lant Street. The majority of the inhabitants either direct their energies to the letting of furnished apartments, or devote themselves to the healthful and invigorating pursuit of mangling. The chief features in the still life of the street are green shutters, lodging bills and brass door plates, the pot-boy, the muffin youth, and the baked potatoe man. The population is migratory, usually disappearing on the verge of quarter-day, and generally by night. His Majesty's revenues are seldom collected in this happy valley; the rents are dubious; and the water communication is very frequently cut off.

Few passages are more familiar than the above, but I have quoted it less for its admirable scenic touches than because it shows a subtle touch of tenderness underlying the riotous fun. The makeshift devices of the poor stir the springs of his pity, even while he is smiling at them.

Many have made us realize the pathos of the 'seamy

side'; with the daring of genius Dickens has given us the humour through the pathos, and the pathos through the humour. This is the authentic Dickens method, and that is why such figures as the Little Marchioness and Dick Swiveller are unforgettable; they are as much an integral part of London Life as the shabby street, the broken-down inn.

Memories of his own experience in Lant Street must have haunted Dickens when he wrote *Pickwick*. Here—in a back attic, at the house of an Insolvent Court Agent from the Marshalsea, where he stayed as a boy—"A bed and bedding," wrote Dickens, "were sent over for me and made upon the floor. The little window had a pleasant prospect of a timber-yard; and when I took possession of my new abode, I thought it was a paradise."

Many are the vivid sketches of Southern London. The neighbourhood known as Jacob's Island, in Bermondsey, has now been made comparatively clean and respectable. When *Oliver Twist* was written, and for many years afterwards, it was a foul, polluted, and wretched spot, and numerous have been the testimonies to the fidelity of Dickens's detailed and graphic description: "Crazy, wooden galleries, common to the backs of half a dozen houses, with holes from whence to look at the slime beneath; windows, broken and patched, with poles thrust out on which to dry the linen which is never there; rooms so small, so filthy, so confined that the air would seem too tainted even for the dirt and squalor which they shelter."

The Uncommercial Traveller is rich in sketches of Victorian London. One of the best is entitled, "Night Walks," and certainly no one was better qualified to

write of London by night than Dickens, for time after time the highly-strung excitable author would pace the streets long after most folks were in bed. How keenly he feels the personality of the City!

> The restlessness of a great city and the way in which it tumbles and tosses before it can get to sleep, formed one of the first entertainments offered to the contemplation of us harmless people. . . . Except in the Haymarket, which is the worst kept part of London, and about Kent Street in the Borough, and along a portion of the line of the Old Kent Road, the peace was seldom violently broken. But it was always the case that London, as if in imitation of the individual citizens belonging to it, had expiring fits and starts of restlessness. After all seemed quiet, if one cab rattled by, half a dozen would surely follow; and Houselessness even observed that intoxicated people appeared to be magnetically attracted towards each other.

That might be written to-day. The description of "the stones that pave the way to Waterloo Bridge," and the thumbnail sketch of the toll-keeper, are clearly dated. So also the reverie about the Courts of Law in Westminster, which hinted "in low whispers what numbers of people they were keeping awake, and how intensely wretched and horrible they were rendering the small hours to unfortunate suitors."

The spirit of modernity has touched the Inns of Court since Dickens's day; but only gently, and the *genius loci* may still be felt as Dickens felt it. The peculiar sense of loneliness in those solitary chambers again and again he has pictured in novel and fugitive paper:—

> It is not to be denied that on the terrace of the Adelphi, . . . or anywhere among the neighbourhoods that have done flowering and have run to seed, you may find Chambers replete

with the accommodations of solitude, closeness, and darkness, where you may be as low-spirited as in the genuine article, and might be as easily murdered, with the placid reputation of having merely gone down to the seaside. But the many waters of life did run musical in those dry channels once,—among the Inns never.

I doubt whether in the varied collection of legal luminaries, from the Judge on the Bench down to the Solicitor's clerk, there are many substantial differences to be noted to-day. Genuine caricature, which exhibits the playful imagination of the close observer, here and there has exaggerated characteristics, but the likeness is always recognizable. The race of Sergeant Buzfuz certainly is becoming extinct, for the *ore rotundo* method has fallen into disrepute, just as legal documents, standing jests in all ages for their astounding prolixity, have themselves become less loquacious and periphrastic. Solicitors of the Dodson and Fogg type are happily rarer; but there is much, even in *Pickwick*, which links Victorian with Edwardian London, and in the later stories counterparts in modern life for such characters as Tulkinghorn and Jaggers may easily be found.

In one respect, however, Dickens's pictures of the professional, whether he be lawyer or physician, are especially characteristic of his time. There is far less now of that air of mystery, that Turveydrop professionalism, by which the lawyer and doctor of Victorian London sought to separate himself from the lay world. There has been a gradual levelling up in education, and medicine and law are no longer looked upon as the sacred and mysterious prerogative of a special caste.

Before leaving the 'dusty purlieus of the law,' here is a sketch of Symond's Inn, which has vanished now for many a year. Once it stood lonely and haggard in

Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane; now it is replaced by the stir and whirr of Printing.

A little, pale, wall-eyed, woe-begone Inn, like a large dustbin of two compartments and a sifter. It looks as if Symond were a sparing man in his day, and constructed his Inn of old building materials, which took kindly to the dry rot, and to dirt, and all things decaying and dismal, and perpetuated Symond's memory with congenial shabbiness.

Victorian Holborn was far more disreputable a neighbourhood in Dickens's day than now. No longer would it be possible to assail the street door in Kingsgate Street, where Mrs. Gamp lived—

by pebbles, walking-sticks, and fragments of tobacco pipes, all much more efficacious than the street-door knocker, which was so constructed as to wake the street with ease, and even spread alarm of fire in Holborn, without making the smallest impression on the premises to which it was addressed.

Speaking of Holborn reminds one of Mr. Chadband, who delivered himself of an afternoon to his admirers in Mr. Snagsby's shop in Cook Court (Took Court). Chadband is essentially a Victorian type of mealy-mouthed moralist, as characteristic of the fifties as Stiggins of the thirties. Hypocrisy has not vanished, but its garb and speech are different. Dickens never did better work than in exposing the pretentious folly of these sorry specimens of "religious" teachers.

The parvenu, who figures so largely in the pages of *Punch* in Mid-Victorian times, and was becoming prominent in Dickens's day, receives attention in *Our Mutual Friend*, and the description of the Veneerings is one of the brightest satires in a book which, on the whole, is not Dickens at his best.

Mr. and Mrs. Veneering were brand-new people in a brand-new house in a brand-new quarter of London. Everything

about the Veneerings was spick and span new. All their furniture was new, all their friends were new, all their servants were new, their plate was new, their carriage was new, their harness was new, their horses were new, their pictures were new, they themselves were new, they were as newly married as was lawfully compatible with their having a brand-new baby, and if they had set up a great-grandfather he would have come home in matting from the Pantechnicon, without a scratch upon him, French polished to the crown of his head.

For, in the Veneering establishment, from the hall chairs with the new coat-of-arms, to the grand pianoforte with the new action, and upstairs again to the new fire-escape, all things were in a state of high varnish and polish. And what was observable in the furniture was observable in the Veneerings—the surface smelt a little too much of the workshop, and was a trifle sticky.

With the change of manners that was becoming appreciable in the New London, it was to be expected that Duelling, so long recognized as the legitimate end of a quarrel, should be discouraged. It has already become ridiculous in Dickens's day, and is tantamount to a breach of the peace. But the Mr. Nupkinses of the eighteenth century would not have concerned themselves in the matter. Then, the most ridiculous quarrels ended tragically. Colonel Montgomery fell by the bullet of a friend with whom he had squabbled about the respective merits of their pet dogs. Finally, after being discouraged for many years among civilians, the War Office set its seal upon public sentiment by declaring that it was suitable to the character of honourable men to offer and accept explanations and apologies for wrong committed.

Tea gardens, so popular with all ranks of society in the eighteenth century, had fallen into disfavour except among the poorer folk. But Vauxhall was at the height

of its popularity, and survived until the Great Exhibition. The Vauxhall Garden of the thirties was the Earl's Court of the Early Victorians, being open usually only during the summer months, providing musical and acrobatic entertainments, and winding up with fireworks.

The 'earthly paradise,' as the guide-book pleasingly termed Vauxhall, is plentifully illustrated in contemporary prose and verse. Goldsmith describes a visit there in 1760; Walpole struck attitudes over its enchantments, and Albert Smith and Thackeray are ready with their tributes. Both in *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis* are we introduced to this ravishing place, first in the company of light-hearted Fanny Bolton, subsequently in that of green-eyed Becky and gentle Amelia, to say nothing of the genial Mr. Joe Sedley.

The Drama, in favour once again, finds an excellent recorder in Dickens, himself an actor of much ability, though his theatrical pictures deal for the most part with the humours and crudities of the provincial stage. Some of the old stock companies, however, are inimitably sketched, and the ambitious but not very inspired Shakespearean actor receives the same delightful attention. Who can forget Crummles; Mr. Wopsle, whose reading of *Hamlet* was greeted with a shower of nuts; the equally notorious Ghost who carried a 'ghostly manuscript,' to which it occasionally referred with a nervous haste more suggestive of a 'state of mortality,' or the provincial actor who took a score of parts, and having come on as King Duncan, could not rest in his grave, but came on and called himself some one else?

Dickens is more concerned with crude transpontine drama than with the more artistic efforts in Town,

which afforded less opportunity to the humourist. The fourth edition of "Drury Lane" was built in 1812, but the severe form of drama once identified with that house was suffering a change in Dickens's day, and more approximated to the Drury Lane drama that we know. "The Haymarket" was built in 1821; Buckstone superintended its fortunes, and it was the home of comedy and farce; whilst the "Lyceum," built in 1834, was devoted to opera, though with not very great success.

A great change in the topography of London took place in Dickens's day—the opening of the Holborn Viaduct, November 6, 1869. It meant a vast difference to the horse traffic, as the gradient had been a most severe one, and involved the reconstruction of a considerable district.

Hungerford Market, where Mr. Peggotty slept on his arrival in London, and in the neighbourhood of which the Micawbers lodged before departing from England for Colonial glories, vanished, and gave place to Charing Cross Station.

Westminster put on new clothes also. The old Houses of Parliament, familiar to the young reporter, were destroyed by fire in 1834, and it was decided that the new buildings should be in the Gothic style, which had recently revived. The new building was started in 1840, the architect being Sir Charles Barry. Critics have complained that there is very little Gothic about it save in the details; that it is a curious compromise between the Classical and Gothic, that it is hopelessly Modern; that the Victoria Tower is unwieldy and the ornament ineffectual. Certainly, in its composite inspiration it is characteristically English, and pleasantly typical of the men whom it shelters. Whatever its architectural faults may be, its spacious stateliness

makes it one of the most notable features in Modern London.

The greatest change, however, that was taking place during the Age of Dickens was the Extension of London.

In 1831, Bow, Stratford, Bromley, Clapham, Tottenham, Canonbury, shaped as modest villages; while such places as Brixton and Chalk Farm were separated from London. Bayswater Road was beginning to be looked upon as a residential neighbourhood, now that its disagreeable associations were obliterated; but Westbourne Grove and Earl's Court were rural districts. The Thames Embankment was a dream of the future not realized till 1870. But Waterloo Bridge was opened in 1817; New London Bridge in 1831 and Covent Garden Market in 1830.

The Commissioners of the Exhibition of 1851 purchased property at rural Brompton,—and shortly afterwards South Kensington became a flourishing residential neighbourhood. To the Crystal Palace fell the reversion of the glass and iron used in the Exhibition, and in Dickens's later days, the Palace was to the Londoner what Vauxhall had been to his early youth.

Turning from Topography to Science—we note that between 1840 and 1850 the Electric Telegraph made rapid strides. The first public telegraph in England was established in 1844, between Paddington and Slough. Medicine was becoming less empirical: and therapeutics was no longer the happy-go-lucky affair it had been in the past. Bleeding and purging—though still favoured by many, were being displaced. The difference between the old and new schools is cleverly illustrated in the

novels of George Eliot.[1] The introduction of Chloroform (1847) not only proved a boon to the patient, but made a vast difference to the work of the surgeon. A more thorough knowledge of mental pathology, combined with a broader humanitarian spirit, worked great changes in the treatment of the insane. The barbarous methods of the many iniquitous private asylums had found an eloquent exponent in Charles Reade; and one of the significant features of this period is the tendency of the literary writer to concern himself more and more with the problems of the hour. The Country for long had claimed its poets, its novelists, and essayists—but only now and again do we find the man of letters concerning himself with the life of the Town.

In the earlier years of the century, a brilliant little group of singers had distracted our men's minds from the storm and stress of the Revolutions, and had spoken to them in fresh and sweet accents of the moorland and the valley; or taken them to some 'peak in Darien' out of earshot of dusty cities, where they could feast their eyes with the blessed expanses of beauty always visible to the eye of the Poet.

But the next generation felt that, however good it might be to stay on the heights, there was work to be done below and problems to be tackled. And the poet, the essayist, the novelist fight hand to hand with the politician and social reformer. We are come to the age of Carlyle, of Dickens, of Kingsley, of Mill.

Kingsley writes passionate social tracts in the guise of a story; Cheap Bread inspires the muse of Ebenezer Elliott; Elizabeth Barrett voices 'The Cry of the Children,' and Thomas Hood immortalizes the weary

[1] Notably *Scenes from Clerical Life* and *Middlemarch*.

sempstress and the despairing unfortunate. Carlyle, after excursions into German Literature and European History, plunges into the political problems of the day. Ruskin, starting as critic of the Art of Painting, turns in the new century to the more complex Art of Life, and no man of letters has tackled Industrial Problems with greater insight and more brilliant suggestiveness.

Meanwhile the cry of the Chartists—'Give us not protection but political rights'—had in part been realized! The agitation which had died down since the passing of the first Reform Act, had increased in volume and urgency, and it was clear that the claim of the working classes could no longer be neglected. In the summer of 1867 the working men in the towns of England for the first time had a voice in the management of national affairs.

A great power was now in their hands; the next important step was the securing that the power should be rightly used, and in 1870 we have the famous Education Act—that system of National Education of which Arnold so warmly approved.

In 1859 a new influence came into the literary and social life of the day. Social Politics had impressed themselves on Early Victorian Literature. Natural Science was to influence the Literature of the mid-century.

The publication of *The Origin of Species* started a new era. Poetry and fiction are infected by the new spirit—the spirit of scientific observation and philosophic analysis. We move in the atmosphere of George Eliot, Matthew Arnold, Clough, Huxley, Browning.

In so far as this new departure affected London life,

it may be noted in the systematizing of Popular Education, the increasing desire for culture. The Literary and Scientific Institute takes a more prominent place in the life of the day; and science, once a sealed book save to an elect few, has become democratized. The man of science is no longer an academic recluse—he is, in the person of Huxley, a man of rare influence as a social and educational force.

Amidst the multifarious activities of the Mid-Century, what is it that impresses us the most strongly? It is this. The old militant individualism which animated Place entirely, and Dickens very largely, is disappearing. The earlier years saw the awakening of democratic London; in later years the people are learning to make use of the powers they have acquired. And in doing this, even in Dickens's day, a change in the political atmosphere is noticeable. This individualism was the mainspring of the elder Radicalism and the earlier democratic movements. But even so staunch an Individualist as John Stuart Mill soon grew conscious of the limitations of the Benthamite creed. When intolerance of interference with the individual went to the point of resisting the Factory Acts, it was clear that 'something was rotten' in the state of Radicalism.

The Benthamites had done a great and good work with their doctrine of utility, for they purged the English Constitution of anomalies and absurdities, and reshaped on sound and orderly lines our jurisprudence. But they under-rated the anarchic tendencies of unrestrained competition, and in their distaste for State interference they rendered largely nugatory the very freedom whose banner they were ever waving. John Stuart Mill illustrates the two streams of thought—Collectivism and Individualism—crossing and recrossing one

another in his writings. Kingsley and the Christian Social Movement break with the older Individualistic Radicalism; and the Collectivist Ideal, after the death of Dickens, claims more and more adherents. Whether the Collectivist ideal itself, if exclusively pursued, may develop mischievous tendencies of its own, is a subject which there is no need to discuss here. What I have recorded is rather a matter of history than of opinion.

An interesting attempt has been made lately by Mr. Pugh to show that Dickens was an unconscious Socialist. That in some of his later writings—*Hard Times*, for instance—socialistic tendencies may be discernible, I cannot deny. But taking the body of his work as a whole, the impression left on my mind is that of a kindly, large-hearted Radical of the Old School—the self-made man, the man who tacitly accepted class divisions, and whose sovereign remedy for distress was a sovereign; the man whose social gospel is not unfairly expressed in the Brothers Cheeryble (whom Mr. Pugh detests). Had he lived twenty years later, it is possible, of course, that his general view of social remedies might have been different, though it is always the observer rather than the thinker that impresses one with Dickens.

But I do not sympathize particularly with the endeavour to socialize a writer whose individualism, with its merits and demerits alike, seems so strikingly explicit not only in his writings, but in his letters and conversations. After all, the fine humanitarianism of Dickens is peculiar neither to the socialist nor individualist. It is the heritage of every sincere, tender-hearted man, whatever be his political creed.

And here we must pause, on the brink of a new

chapter in our social life—a chapter rich in fresh departures in Art, Science, Letters, and Politics.

London, once fitfully feeling her way to self-expression, is now in the maturity of her powers, surrounded by a cluster of children, who in their turn will—to adopt a phrase of Turgot's, concerning colonies—"when they become ripe, detach themselves from the parent tree."

One thing, if nothing else, stands out clearly in the London Life of the Ages—the gradual coming of the Democracy. At first it is little better than the vindication of the right to live—to physically exist; then as corporate life grew stronger in mediæval London the poor man found his champions, and he began to take some share in the shaping of affairs. For a time the poor man and the middle class man fought the nobles. Then the day came when the middle class man entered into his Kingdom and straightway forgot his poorer colleague. Now, he also is on the threshold of the Kingdom. The journey is a tempestuous one: "For," as Arnold Toynbee has finely said, "Democracy is sudden, like the sea, and grows dark with storms and sweeps away many precious things; but like the sea it reflects the light of the wide heaven, and cleanses the shores of human life."

APPENDIX

THE following suggestions are made for the benefit of those who may care to study the various phases of London life at greater length than is admitted by the scope of the present brief sketch. The literature dealing directly and indirectly with London is very voluminous, and a brief selection only of books is possible here. For further amplification in various directions the reader is referred to the Catalogue in the Guildhall Library.

INTRODUCTORY AND GENERAL

London (Historic Towns Series), by W. J. Loftie. Longmans, 1887.
A short sketch of social and political London and the growth of its municipal life.

London, by Walter Besant. Chatto and Windus, 1892 and 1898.
Two editions of this—the more expensive one, 7s. 6d., well illustrated.
Mainly a sketch of social London down to the time of George II.

A History of London (2 vols.), by W. J. Loftie. Second Edition 1884. Stanford.
A history of the city of London as told by the Chroniclers, 'woven into a continuous narrative.' Deals also with growth of the suburbs and with the history of the Middlesex. With Maps and Illustrations.

Old and New London (6 vols.), by Walter Thornbury. Cassells, 1885.
Profusely illustrated. Pleasantly discursive and anecdotal.

London Past and Present (3 vols.), by H. B. Wheatley and Cunningham. John Murray, 1891.
An invaluable commentary on the topography of London.

The Highways and Byeways of London, by Mrs. E. T. Cook. Macmillan, 1892.
Popularly written. Illustrated.

London and the Kingdom (3 vols.), by Reginald R. Sharpe. Longmans, 1895.
Dealing particularly with the part played by the city of London in the life of the nation.

ANTHOLOGIES OF LONDON

London in Song. Edited by Wilfred Whitten. Grant Richards, 1898.
An attractive volume admirably edited.

The Charm of London, compiled by Alfred H. Hyatt. Chatto and Windus, 1907.

London's Lure, by Helen and Lewis Melville. Bell, 1909.
Two dainty little books recently published, with extracts in prose and verse in praise of London.

SPECIAL PERIODS

A. MEDIÆVAL.

I. *Social and Political.*

(*a*) *Roman and Saxon London.*

History and Antiquities of London, by Thomas Allen. 1827-29.

Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society.

Early London, by Walter Besant. A. and C. Black, 1908.
A highly suggestive experiment in the recreation of the life of an age, singularly scanty in actual record.

The following also may be consulted :—

The Conquest of England, by J. R. Green. Macmillan, 1884.

Select Charters, by William Stubbs. Clarendon Press, 1888.

Social England, edited by H. D. Traill (vol. i.). Cassells, 1893.

(*b*) *The London of Fitz-Stephen and Matthew Paris.* The Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.

Fitz-Stephen's "Survey."
The earliest picture of English social life written in the reign of Henry II. and first printed with Stow's "Survey" (1598).

The Commune of London, by J. Horace Round. Constable, 1899.
A fresh re-handling of the early municipal life of London.

The following also may be consulted :—

Constitutional History of England (3 vols.), by William Stubbs. Clarendon Press, 1880.
The chapter in vol. iii. dealing with the growth of London especially useful.

England under the Normans and Angevins, by H. W. C. Davis. Methuen, 1905.

(*c*) *The London of Langland and Chaucer.*

Mediæval London (social), by Walter Besant. A. and C. Black, 1906.
A sumptuous illustrated volume.

Piers Plowman, by M. Jusserand. Unwin.
A good translation of a brilliant study.

England in the Age of Wycliffe, by G. M. Trevelyan. Longmans, 1899.
An acknowledged authority on the period.

Chaucer and his England, by G. G. Coulton. Methuen, 1908.
A judicial and scholarly study of Chaucer and his age.

The following also may be consulted :—

The Vision of William Langland concerning Piers the Plowman. A and B Texts, edited by Prof. Skeat.

The Canterbury Tales. Publications of the Chaucer Society.
Several of the Tales have been done into modern English by Prof. Skeat in the "King's Classics" Series.

English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages, by M. Jusserand. Unwin.

(*d*) *The London of Whittington and Crosby.*

Sir Richard Whittington, by Besant and Rice.
A delightful little volume, picturing the material splendour of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The article on Whittington in the Dictionary of National Biography, traversing some of Besant's conclusions, should be read also.

The Story of London (Mediævel Town Series), by H. B. Wheatley. Dent, 1905.

Crosby Hall, by C. W. F. Foss.

The Guilds and Companies of London, by George Unwin. Methuen.

Memorials of the City of London in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries, edited by H. T. Riley. 1868.
An invaluable source of information on the life of the period. Extracts from the early archives of the city.

The following also may be consulted :—

Liber Albus, The White Book of the City of London (1419), translated from the Latin and Norman French by H. T. Riley. 1861.
A compilation prepared in "the last mayoralty of Richard Whittington."

Town Life in the Fifteenth Century, by Alice S. Green (2 vols.). Macmillan.

English Industry and Commerce (vol. i.), by William Cunningham. 1890, Cambridge.

Historical Charters and Documents of the City of London. Whiting.

The Paston Letters (1422-1509), edited by James Gairdner (3 vols., Westminster, 1895, Introduction and Supplement 1901).
Throws invaluable light on domestic life in the fifteenth century.

II. *Ecclesiastical*

Mediæval London (Ecclesiastical), by Walter Besant. A. and C. Black, 1906.
Profusely illustrated.

Woman under Monasticism, by L. Eckenstein. Cambridge Press.

Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey, by A. P. Stanley. Murray, 1868.

St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield, by George Worsley. Bell.

The Coming of the Friars, by Dr. Jessop. Unwin, 1888.

The Temple Church, by T. H. Bayliss, K.C. Philip, 1893-1895.
Two editions, 7s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. net.

B. Modern London.

(*a*) *London and the Renascence.*

Stow's "Survey" (cheap modern edition). Edited by H. Morley. Routledge.
First published 1598.

Henry VIII., by A. F. Pollard. Longmans, 1908.
The latest and most judicial study of Henry.

Tudor Tracts, introduction by A. F. Pollard. Constable, 1903.
Throws some curious sidelights on the life of the day.

Cardinal Wolsey, by Mandell Creighton.

Life of Sir Thomas More, by William Roper. Edited by J. Rawson Lumby.

Life of Queen Elizabeth, by Agnes Strickland. Dent.

Queen Elizabeth, by Mandell Creighton. Longmans, 1900.
The best study of Elizabeth's personality.

Italian Renaissance in England, by L. Einstein.

The following also may be consulted :—

Reign of Henry VIII. (2 vols.), by J. S. Brewer. Murray.

Literary History of the English People (vol. ii.), by M. Jusserand. Unwin.

(*b*) *London and the Reformation.*

English Monastic Life, by Abbot Gasquet. Methuen. See also Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries (2 vols.).

The Suppression of the Monasteries (Short Studies), by J. A. Froude. Also reprinted in Froude's Essays, "Everyman" Series. See also chapters in Froude's History of England.
These two should be read together, Froude stating the "Protestant" case, Gasquet the "Catholic." Gasquet presents the case on the whole in a most moderate manner.

London in the Time of the Tudors, by Walter Besant. A. and C. Black, 1904.
Profusely illustrated.

The Tower of London (2 vols.), by Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower. George Bell, 1901.
Illustrated.

The following also may be consulted :—

England under the Tudors, by Arthur D. Innes. Methuen, 1904.
One of the best studies of Tudor Times.

Latimer's Sermons. Cassells.

(*c*) *The London of Shakespeare.*

Shakespeare's London, by T. F. Ordish. Dent.

The England of Shakespeare, by Edwin Goadby. Cassells.

Shakespeare : Life and Work, by F. J. Furnivall and John Munro.

William Shakespeare, by George Brandes. Heinemann.
An able and exhaustive study of Shakespeare's work and times.

The Gull's Horn Book, by T. Dekker. Dent.
A contemporary picture of the Elizabethan "Man about Town."

Harrison's "Description" (Camelot Series). Scott.
A contemporary picture of social life and manners.

The following also may be consulted :—

The Best Plays of Ben Jonson (Mermaid Series). Unwin.

Lyrics from Elizabeth's Song Books. Edited by A. H. Bullen.

Lyrics from Elizabeth's Dramatists. Edited by A. H. Bullen.

The English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare, by M. Jusserand. Unwin.

(*d*) *The London of Milton and Cromwell.*

Milton, by David Masson. Macmillan.

Essay on Milton in Macaulay's Essays.

The Life of Milton, by David Masson (6 vols.). Macmillan.
Contains an interesting picture of Milton the "controversialist."

Cromwell, by J. A. Picton. Edinburgh, 1883.

Cromwell, by Frederic Harrison. Edinburgh, 1888.

Cromwell, by John Morley. Edinburgh, 1900.

Cromwell, by S. R. Gardiner. Edinburgh, 1901.
Each with distinctive merits of its own.

The following also may be consulted :—

History of the Civil War (3 vols.), by S. R. Gardiner.

History of the Commonwealth (3 vols.), by S. R. Gardiner. 1888-1903.

Memoirs of the Verney Family (4 vols.), from the Restoration to the Revolution.

Stuart Tracts, introduction by C. H. Firth. Constable.

The Old Palace of Whitehall, by Edgar Sheppard.

Carlyle's Cromwell.

(*e*) *The London of Pepys and Wren.*

Pepys's Diary (the Globe edition). Macmillan.

Evelyn's Diary. Dent.

Defoe's History of the Plague. Dent.

London in the Time of the Stuarts, by Walter Besant. A. and C. Black, 1903.
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